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HOMES AND HOSPITALS:

OR

TWO PHASES OF WOMAN'S WORK,

AS EXHIBITED IN THE LABORS OF

AMY DUTTON AND AGNES E. JONES.



NEW YORK:
E. P. DUTTON AND COMPANY.

713 BROADWAY.

1873.



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INTRODUCTION.

THERE are few topics of more thrilling interest than those presented by the self-denying labors of Christian women among the forlorn and vicious. Both in England and America, the Church is awaking to a consciousness of the vast power that it may have, if only these labors be properly directed and judiciously managed.

The present volume is the result of a desire to help in the great work, by presenting two noble examples that show what has been done, and what is possible in two distinct lines of labor. In the one case, Amy Dutton proves, to use her own words, "How a woman can, without permanently renouncing her home ties and duties, try to do some lowly but real work in the streets and lanes of the city, by caring for the distressed in their homes." In the other instance, Miss Jones proves the great advantage of thorough training, and the vast influence that one woman may wield, who is not only thus trained, but who is also able to give up everything and consecrate her whole time and

entire energies to the grand work of improving our hospitals and workhouses. The two examples are noteworthy ; and by placing them side by side, we see how the one is the complement of the other, and how both are necessary to society.

In introducing Amy Dutton's record to its readers in England, where it was published under the title, "The Streets and Lanes of a City," the Reverend Doctor Moberly, Bishop of Salisbury, after testifying to the absolute truth of every incident related in it, says :—

"It records, with necessary changes of name only, a portion of the experience, selected out of overflowing materials, of two ladies, during several years of devoted work as district parochial visitors in a large population in the North of England.

"Perhaps I ought to be content with thus assuring the reader that he reads nothing here but the mere unadorned facts, and to leave him to appreciate for himself the liveliness and ability of the narrative, and the cheerful sympathy and tenderness that have charmed me, as I think they will not fail to charm him, in every page of this little book. But I cannot refrain from drawing from this simple tale a strong inference as to the great value of the institution (so general in the Church of England, and so remarkably characteristic of it) of lady visitors of the poor, under the direction of the parochial clergy.

"Rejoicing as I do with all my heart at the estab-

lishment of more formal methods of utilizing the devotion of such Christian women, as, from the circumstances of their families, are able to leave their homes, and give themselves up wholly to Church work in sisterhoods, institutions of deaconesses, training establishments for nursing the sick, and the like ; I feel that we have in the widely diffused practice of such parochial visiting in England, a link in the chain that binds various classes together in love and mutual kindness, of inestimable value. The lady who devotes a real portion of her time to such visiting, under the superintendence of the clergyman of the parish, and still retains her place in her family and in the society of her friends, has, as is amply shown in this narrative, great opportunities of bringing to bear upon the poor the sympathy and assistance of those among whom she lives. Moreover, besides the direct benefits which she imparts to her poorer neighbors, and the family duties which she is still able to discharge at home, her position and work tend to break down the unfortunate distinction between 'religious' and 'secular' life, which, while it does little to make the 'religious' more religious, endangers the abandonment of the 'secular' to more complete, and, as it were, authorized secularity. Thus, as in one aspect the lady visitor may be said to be a link between the rich and poor, in another she helps to blend the 'religious' life with the 'secular,' and in both does service of extreme value to the Church and Nation.

“ But I must not indulge myself in pursuing these

thoughts. I would rather let them arise naturally, as I think they will hardly fail to arise in the reader's mind, from the perusal of this little narrative."

Miss Florence Nightingale, the champion of trained hospital nursing, is, perhaps, of all women, the most authoritative teacher on her special theme ; and she has prepared a memorial of Miss Jones, that appeared in " Good Words " for June, 1868, which appropriately introduces us to the reminiscences that follow the account of the work of Miss Dutton in this volume. Miss Nightingale says : —

" One woman has died — a woman attractive and rich, and young and witty ; yet a veiled and silent woman, distinguished by no other genius but the divine genius — working hard to train herself in order to train others to walk in the footsteps of Him who went about doing good. To follow Him, she spent herself in activity ; she overworked, because others underwork. Shall we let her have died in vain ?

" She died as she had lived, at her post, in one of the largest workhouse infirmaries in this kingdom — the first in which trained nursing has been introduced. She is the pioneer of workhouse nursing. I do not give her name ! were she alive, she would beg me not. Of all human beings I have ever known, she was (I was about to say) the most free from desire of the praise of men. But I cannot say — most free ; for she was perfectly free. She was absolutely without

human vanity ; she preferred being unknown to all but God ; she did not let her right hand know what her left hand did. I will, therefore, call her Una, if you please ; for, when her whole life and image rise before me, so far from thinking the story of Una and her lion a myth, I say, Here is Una in real flesh and blood — Una and her paupers, far more untamable than lions.

“The graceful, tender legends of Catholic saints and martyrs have not a greater miracle than we have here in the flesh. She lived the life, and died the death, of the saints and martyrs ; though the greatest sinner would not have been more surprised than she, to have heard this said of herself. In less than three years she had reduced one of the most disorderly hospital populations in the world to something like Christian discipline, such as the police themselves wondered at. She had led, so as to be of one mind and heart with her, upwards of fifty nurses and probationers ; of whom the faithful few whom she took with her, of our trained nurses, were but a seed. She had converted a vestry to the conviction of the economy, as well as humanity, of nursing pauper sick by trained nurses, — the first instance of the kind in England ; for vestries, of whom she had almost the most enlightened, the most liberal body of men in England, to support her, *must* look after the pockets of their rate-payers as well as the benefit of their sick. But, indeed, the superstition seems now to be exploding, that to neglect sick paupers is the way to keep down pauperism. She had converted the Poor Law Board — a body, perhaps, not

usually given to much enthusiasm about Unas and paupers — to these views ; two of whom bore witness to this effect.

“ She had disarmed all opposition, all sectarian zealotism ; so that Roman Catholic and Unitarian, High Church and Low Church, all literally rose up and called her ‘blessed.’ Churchwardens led the way in the vestry-meeting which was held in her honor after her death ; and really affecting speeches, made while moving the resolution of condolence (no mere form) to her family, were the tribute to her public service. All, of all shades of religious creed, seemed to have merged their differences in her, seeing in her the one true essential thing, compared with which they acknowledged their differences to be as nothing. And aged paupers made verses in her honor after her death.

“ In less than three years — the time generally given to the ministry on earth of that Saviour whom she so earnestly strove closely to follow — she did all this. She had the gracefulness, the wit, the unfailing cheerfulness — qualities so remarkable, but so much overlooked in our Saviour’s life. She had the absence of all asceticism, or ‘mortification’ for mortification’s sake, which characterized his work, and any real work in the present day, as in his day. And how did she do all this ? She was not, when a girl, of any conspicuous ability, except that she had cultivated in herself to the utmost a power of getting through business in a short time, without slurring it over and without fid-fadding at it ; real business — her Father’s business. She was always

filled with the thought that she must be about her 'Father's business.' How can any undervalue business habits? as if anything could be done without them. She could do, and she did do, more of her Father's business in six hours, than ordinary women do in six months, or than most of even the best women do in six days. But, besides this and including this, she had trained herself to the utmost — she was always training herself; for this is no holiday work. Nursing is an art; and, if it is to be made an art, requires as exclusive a devotion, as hard a preparation, as any painter's or sculptor's work; for what is the having to do with dead canvas or cold marble, compared with having to do with the living body — the temple of God's Spirit? It is one of the Fine Arts; I had almost said, the finest of the Fine Arts. I have seen somewhere in print, that nursing is a profession to be followed by the 'lower middle-class.' Shall we say that painting or sculpture is a profession to be followed by the 'lower middle-class'? Why limit the class at all? Or shall we say that God is only to be served in his sick by the 'lower middle-class'? The poorest child without shoes, the most highly born, have alike followed all these professions with success, have alike had to undergo the hardest work, if for success. There is no such thing as amateur art; there is no such thing as amateur nursing.

"It appears to be the most futile of all distinctions to classify as between 'paid' and unpaid art; so between 'paid' and unpaid nursing — to make into a test a

circumstance as adventitious as whether the hair is black or brown, viz., whether people have private means or not, whether they are obliged or not to work at their art or their nursing for a livelihood. Probably no person ever did that well, which he did only for money. Certainly no person ever did that well, which he did not work at as hard as if he did it solely for money. If by amateurs in art or in nursing are meant those who take it up for play, it is not art at all, it is not nursing at all. You never yet made an artist by paying him well. But — an artist ought to be well paid.

“I return to the training which this servant of God gave herself.

“Before she came to us, she had been at Kaiserswerth, and already knew more than most hospital matrons know when they undertake matronship. She was some time with the Bible-women in London. Overdone with cares and business, I had lost sight of her, when I was taken by surprise at hearing from our training-school at St. Thomas's Hospital, that she had asked for admittance there to have a year's training, a step entirely unprompted by us. She told me afterwards that she felt, when she had entered there, as if she knew nothing. While there, she went through all the training of a nurse. Her reports of cases were admirable as to nursing details. She was our best pupil; she went through all the work of a soldier; and she thereby fitted herself for being the best general we ever had.

“Many a time, in her after life at the workhouse, she

wrote, that without her training at St. Thomas's Hospital she could have done nothing. Unless a superintendent herself knows what the nurses she has to superintend ought to do, she is always at a loss. She is never sure of her work. She must be herself the measure of their work. In a workhouse, she said, this must be preëminently the case — more even than in a hospital — because on a workhouse infirmary matron fall many more of the decisions as to petty medical matters, than on a London hospital matron, where the medical and surgical staff are much more numerous and constant.

“‘ Without a regular hard *London* hospital training I should have been “nowhere,” ’ she used to say.

“ She was fond of telling her obligations to our admirable matron at St. Thomas's Hospital. I need, however, but to recall one thing. ‘ This very year that she was taken from us, she had intended to have ‘ two months more training ’ at St. Thomas's Hospital, as soon as she could safely take ‘ a holiday ’ — (what a holiday !) — after three weeks with her dear mother and sister. She said she should learn ‘ so much ’ now, having won her experience, if she had ‘ a little more training.’ ”

“ Dear fellow-countrywomen, if any of you are unwilling to leave a loved and happy home, if any of you are unwilling to give up a beloved daughter or sister, know that this servant of God had a home as fair and happy as any, which she loved beyond all created things, and that her mother and sister gave her up to

do God's work. Upon the awful character of that sacrifice I cannot speak. They 'gave her' (and it) 'to God.'

"I will return to her work at the workhouse. How did she do it all? She did it simply by the manifestation of the life which was in her — the trained, well-ordered life of doing her Father's business — so different from the governing, the ordering about, the driving principle. And everybody recognized it — the paupers, and the vestry, and the nurses, and the Poor Law Board. As for the nurses (those who understood her), her influence with them was unbounded. They would have died for her. Because they always felt that she cared for them, not merely as instruments of the work, but for each one in herself; not because she wished for popularity or praise among them, but solely for their own well-being. She had *no* care for praise in her at all. But (or rather because of this) she had a greater power of carrying her followers with her than any woman (or man) I ever knew. And she never seemed to know that she was doing anything remarkable.

"It seems unnatural that I should be writing her 'In Memoriam,' — I who have been a prisoner to my room from illness for years, and she so full of health and vigor till almost the last. Within sixteen days of her death I received a letter from her, full of all her own energy about workhouse affairs, and mentioning her illness, which had begun, but bidding me 'not be anxious.' But this is not an 'In Memoriam;' it is a

war-cry — a war-cry such as she would have bid me write ; a cry for successors to fill her place, to fill up the ranks.

“ O, fellow-countrywomen, why do you hang back? Why are there so few of you? We hear so much of ‘idle hands and unsatisfied hearts,’ and nowhere more than in England. All England is ringing with the cry for ‘Women’s Work,’ and ‘Women’s Mission.’ Why are there so few to *do* the ‘work?’ We used to hear of people giving their blood for their country. Since when is it that they only give their ink? We now have in England this most extraordinary state of things — England, who is, or thinks herself, the most religious and the most commercial country in the world. New hospitals, new asylums, new nurses’ homes, and societies for nursing the sick-poor at home, are rising everywhere. People are always willing to give their money for these. The Poor Law Board, the Boards of Guardians, are willing, or compelled, to spend money for separate asylums for workhouse sick. An act was passed last year for the metropolis to this effect. It is proposed to extend it to the whole country. This act, although miserably inadequate, still inaugurates a new order of things, namely, that the workhouse sick shall not be workhouse inmates, not be cared for as mere workhouse inmates, but that they shall be poor sick, cared for as sick who are to be cured, if possible, and treated as becomes a Christian country, if they cannot be cured. But are buildings all that are necessary to take care of the sick? There wants the heart and the

hand — the trained and skillful hand. Every work-house and other hospital in the kingdom ought to be nursed by such hands and such hearts. Tell me, does not this seem like a truism?

“What we mean by challenging England, if she is the most religious and the most commercial country in the world, to do this work, is this: We do not say, as in Roman Catholic countries, the test of fitness to serve God in this way is whether He has given you private means sufficient to do it without pay. We say: the test is, whether you will be trained so as to command the highest pay. May we not hope that in this country our Lord, were He to come again, would say, instead of ‘Ye cannot serve God and Mammon,’ — Ye can by serving God command that mammon necessary for the workers who must also eat — themselves and their families.

“Let the religious motive be so strong that it will enable you to train yourself so as to earn the highest pay for the best work. The pay is offered; it is the trained workers we cannot find to be paid.

“Thirty years ago, if a girl wished for training, there was none to be had. I can truly say there was no training to be had to fit a woman thoroughly for any life whatever. Now the training is offered, there are but few to take it.

“We do not say, as was said to women in my day, Look about you, and see if you can catch painfully a few straws of practical experience or knowledge in the wind. We are not now inviting women to a life, with-

out being able to show, — Here is the training all ready, if you choose to have it ; here is an independent and well-paid calling, waiting to receive you when you leave your training, if only you have fitted yourselves for it. I might say more than this ; I might say we are beset with offers of places for trained nurses and trained superintendents, and we cannot fill them. I would I could go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in. How often I have known Pastor Fliedner, of Kaiserswerth (he is now gone to his glorious rest) say, when thus pressed by calls from pastors and directors of institutions, out of all parts of Germany, ‘ You ask me for deaconesses. Has your district furnished us with any probationers ? No ; not one. Then, am I to give you the finished article, and you not to give me the live material ? Am I to raise deaconesses out of the ground by a stamp of the foot ? ’ That is what we, alas ! feel often inclined to say when we are pressed from all parts of her Majesty’s dominions, colonies included, in that great empire ‘ upon which the sun never sets.’

“ I have spoken chiefly of workhouse hospitals, and their want of trained nurses and trained superintendents, because I had to describe the work of her who was the first to try to fill the deep yawning chasm, but not, like Curtius, to close it up — and because it seemed the most crying want. But why do I call it so ? To answer the calls upon us for trained matrons or superintendents, as well as for trained nurses, for hospitals, and nursing institutions of all kinds, we can

scarcely obtain anything like sufficient living materials. By all who have really labored in these and similar fields, the same tale is told. People cry out and deplore the unremunerative employment for women. The true want is the other way. Women really trained, and capable for good work, can command any wages or salaries. We can't get the women. The remunerative employment is there and is plenty. The want is the women fit to take it.

“It is wonderful (to return to our own case of the hospitals) the absence of thought which exists upon this point. As if a woman could undertake hospital management, or the management of a single ward — in which, more than anything else, hundreds, or even thousands, of lives are involved — without having learnt anything about it, any more than a man can undertake to be, for example, professor of mathematics without having learnt mathematics !

“It is time to come to the dry bones of the affair, after having shown how beautifully these could be clothed in flesh and blood. We admit at St. Thomas's Hospital Training School — subject to the judgment of the matron, and subject to certain conditions being accepted or fulfilled by the probationer — a limited number of probationers to be trained as nurses for the sick-poor. Hitherto we have been compelled to confine ourselves to sending out staffs of nurses to hospitals or workhouses, with a view to their becoming, in their turn, centres of training, because the applications we receive for trained nurses are far more numerous and

urgent than we have power to answer. But did a greater number of probationers, suitable for superior situations, offer themselves, we could provide additional means for training, and answer applications for district nurses, and many others. These probationers receive board, lodging, training entirely free, a certain amount of uniform dress, and a small amount of pay during their year of training.

“Writers on sick nursing have repudiated training, without saying what training is. I perceive that I have used the word ‘training’ a great many times. And neither have I said what it is.

“We require that a woman be sober, honest, truthful ; without which there is no foundation on which to build.

“We train her in habits of punctuality, quietness, trustworthiness, personal neatness. We teach her how to manage the concerns of a large ward or establishment.

“We train her in dressing wounds and other injuries, and in performing all those minor operations which nurses are called upon, day and night, to undertake.

“We teach her how to manage helpless patients in regard to moving, changing, feeding, temperature, and the prevention of bed-sores.

“She has to make and apply bandages, line splints for fractures, and the like. She must know how to make beds with as little disturbance as possible to their inmates. She is instructed how to wait at operations, and as to the kind of aid the surgeon requires at her hands. She is taught cooking for sick ; the principles

on which sick-wards ought to be cleansed, aired, and warmed ; the management of convalescents ; and how to observe sick and maimed patients, so as to give an intelligent and truthful account to the physician or surgeon in regard to the progress of cases in the intervals between visits — a much more difficult thing than is generally supposed. We do not seek to make ‘medical women,’ but simply nurses acquainted with the *principles* which they are required constantly to apply at the bedside.

“For the future superintendent is added a course of instruction in the administration of a hospital, including, of course, the linen arrangements, and what else is necessary for a matron to be conversant with.

“There are those who think that all this is intuitive in women ; that they are born so, or, at least, that it comes to them without training. To such we say, By all means send us as many such geniuses as you can, for we are sorely in want of them.

“For the efficiency, comfort, and success of a nursing staff thus sent out it is, of course, essential that the trained nurses should not go without the trained superintendent, nor the trained superintendent without the trained nurses.

“There are two requisites in a superintendent:—
1. Character and business capacity. 2. Training and knowledge. Without the second, the first is of little avail. Without the first, the second is only partially useful ; for we cannot bring out of a person what is not in her. *We* can only become responsible for the

training. The other qualifications can only be known by trial. Now to take superintendents or head nurses, as is done every day, by receiving and comparing of testimonials (not a day's "Times" but shows this process in the vast majority of institutions) — this is hardly more to the purpose than to do as the Romans did, when they determined the course of conduct they should take by seeing whether there were a flight of crows.

"The future superintendent would be a great deal the better for two years of training for so difficult a post. But such are the calls upon us that we can often give her scarcely one.

"If the lady, in training for a superintendent, can pay her own board, it is, of course, right that she should do so (everything else is, in all cases, given free). At the present time we are able to admit a few gentlewomen free of all expense, and with the small salary above mentioned during the year of training. We have applications from institutions in want of trained superintendents (or matrons), and trained head nurses for hospitals in India and in England, and for a large workhouse infirmary.

"In December we sent to New South Wales, by desire of the government there, which defrayed and assumed all expenses, to take charge of the Sydney Infirmary, and to found a future training-school for the colony, five trained nurses and a trained lady superintendent.

"I give a quarter of a century's European experience when I say that the happiest people, the fondest of

their occupation, the most thankful for their lives, are, in my opinion, those engaged in sick nursing. In my opinion, it is a mere abuse of words to represent the life, as is done by some, as a sacrifice and a martyrdom. But there *have* been martyrs in it. The founders and pioneers of almost everything that is best must be martyrs. But these are the last ever to think themselves so. And for all there must be constant self-sacrifice for the good of all. But the distinction is this: the life is not a sacrifice; it is the engaging in an occupation the happiest of any. But the strong, the healthy wills in any life must determine to pursue the common good at any personal cost — at daily sacrifice. And we must not think that any fit of enthusiasm will carry us through such a life as this. Nothing but the feeling that it is God's work more than ours — that we are seeking his success and not our success — and that we have trained and fitted ourselves by every means which He has granted us to carry out his work, will enable us to go on.

“Three fourths of the whole mischief in women's lives arises from their excepting themselves from the rules of training considered needful for men.

“And even with this thorough training, we shall have many moments of doubt, of dread, of discouragement. But yet the very pressure of the work, of which the cares are so heavy, prevents us from having time to dwell on them.

“The work has great consolations. It has also great disappointments, like every other noble work where

you aim high ; and if there has been one thing expressed to me more often and more strongly by her we have lost, it is what I have tried to say above.

“ I must end as I have begun, with my Una.

“ I cannot say in my weak words, what she used to tell as to her questionings : ‘ Shall I be able ever to meet the dreariness, the disappointments, the isolation ? ’ And the answer, ‘ Not in my own strength, but in his ; not for my work’s sake, but for his.’ ‘ My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in thy weakness.’ That answer of God to St. Paul, she realized in her daily life more than any one I ever knew.

“ She was peculiarly sensitive to little acts and words of kindness, and also of unkindness ; and if a nosegay, a friendly letter came to her in her times of overwork and discouragement, she would take it exactly as if it had been sent her by her Father Himself. ‘ I do not say to Him, “ Give success,” ’ she once said ; ‘ if all fails to human eyes, if I do nothing, “ Not my way, but his be done ; not as I will, but as thou wilt.” ’

“ More completely and unreservedly than any one I ever knew, she gave herself : ‘ Behold the handmaid of the Lord ; be it unto me according to thy word.’

“ And it was so. What she went through during her workhouse life is scarcely known but to God and to one or two. Yet she said that she had ‘ never been so happy in all her life.’

“ All the last winter, she had under her charge above 50 nurses and probationers, above 150 pauper scourers, from 1,290 to 1,350 patients, being from two to three

hundred more than the number of beds. All this she had to provide for and arrange for, often receiving an influx of patients without a moment's warning. She had to manage and persuade the patients to sleep three and four in two beds ; sometimes six, or even eight children, had to be put in one bed ; and being asked on one occasion whether they did not 'kick one another,' they answered, 'O, no, ma'am, we're so comfortable.' Poor little things ! they scarcely remembered ever to have slept in a bed before. But this is not the usual run of workhouse patients. Among them are the worn-out old prostitutes, the worn-out old thieves, the worn-out old drunkards.

"Part of the work in workhouses is to see that the dissolute and desperate old sinners do not corrupt the younger women, fallen, but not hopeless ; to persuade the *delirium tremens* case, wandering about in his shirt, to go back quietly into his ward and his bed. Part of the work is to see that the mothers of the sick children do not quarrel, aye, and fight, and steal the food of one another's children.

"These are among the every-day incidents of workhouse life. And if any one would know what are the lowest depths of human vice and misery, would see the festering mass of decay of living human bodies and human souls, and then would try what one loving soul, filled with the spirit of her God, can do to let in the light of God into this hideous well (worse than the well of Cawnpore), to bind up the wounds, to heal the broken-hearted, to bring release to the captives, — let her study the ways, and follow in the steps of this one

young, frail woman, who has died to show us the way — blessed in her death as in her life.

“If anything ought to nerve the official crowd of the Poor Law Board, and us women on the non-official side, to resolve on fighting this holy crusade, until all the sick-poor of these kingdoms are cared for as children of God, it is surely the fact that so precious a life has been sacrificed in discharging a duty which, if the country had recognized it as a duty, ought to have been unnecessary, after three centuries of a Poor Law.

“The last words spoken to her were, ‘You will soon be with your Saviour.’ Her reply was, ‘I shall be well there.’ And so she passed away. In her coffin she had that listening, beaming expression, peculiar to her : in life, as if always hearkening to the Master’s bidding ; in death, as if hearing the words, ‘Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’

“Years of previous action had prepared this young girl for her life of devotion. Her body was taken back to her own people, to be buried in her father’s vault.

“All the old folks went out to meet her — old men and women of near ninety years of age, who could scarcely move on crutches. The young men, who had been her own scholars in her big boys’ evening class, went a distance to meet the funeral, and carried in the coffin themselves. The school-children and school-mistresses gathered primroses and snowdrops and violets from all the country round, and brought these, and yew and ivy from the garden which she had planted for them herself. The whole district seemed to be there

—at the grave of their dear one. But the hush of solemn silence was so great that they could hear the fall of the violets on the coffin. The grave was surrounded, first by rows of school-children ; behind them, on one side the young women, on the other the young men of her Bible classes — and behind these again, the elder women and men with whom she had read and prayed. She lay, after the service, completely strewn over with primroses and snowdrops showered upon her coffin. After all was over, the school-children and mistresses sent a message to her poor sick paupers, that they would be glad to hear that their kind friend had been as gently laid in her grave, as an infant laid to rest in its mother's arms.

“It is proposed to erect, on the spot where she died, perhaps the grandest religious statue ever sculptured by mortal hands, — Tenerani's Angel of the Resurrection, — as a fitting memorial of her work, and a type of the hope to come. Shall we not also build up living statues to her ? Let *us* add living flowers to her grave, ‘lilies with full hands,’ — not fleeting primroses, not dying flowers. Let *us* bring the work of our hands, and our heads, and our hearts, to finish her work which God has so blessed. Let her not merely ‘rest in peace,’ but let hers be the life which stirs up to fight the good fight against vice and sin, and misery and wretchedness, as she did — the call to arms, which she was ever obeying : —

. ‘The Son of God goes forth to war,
 Who follows in his train ?’

“O daughters of God, are there so few to answer ?”

WORK IN THE HOMES.

WORK IN THE HOMES.



CHAPTER I.

ABBOT'S STREET AND CROOK LANE NINE YEARS
AGO.

ONE street, narrow, ill-paved, ill-lighted, and tumble-down, named Abbot's Street; at right angles with this street, one lane aptly called Crook Lane, for a crook it was and is to the magistrates and police of Norminster;—these together constitute Anne's and my district. On these, nine years ago, we gazed as utter strangers, not without a heart-sinking, for a more unpromising mass of brick and mortar, and lath and plaster, it would have been hard to find. Low houses of modern build, much out of repair, alternated with half-timbered gables, resting each on a couple of worm-eaten oaken pillars, and nodding forward as though from age and decrepitude. Eight signboards indicated the existence of eight public-houses in Abbot's Street alone. There they flaunted almost side by side, as though the Abbot of Misrule, and none other, had given his name to the locality. A slaughter-house,

several small hucksters' shops (at one of which a tall, lean horse was being unharnessed from a coal-cart, and led through his owner's kitchen), a veterinary yard, and two pawnbroking establishments, — these were the most salient features in "the district." The children at play in the gutter looked mostly unwashed and unkempt. Some older girls and mothers, whom the sound of a wandering hurdy-gurdy had brought to their doors, looked listless, unfresh, and hollow-eyed. An individual, pointed out to us as a detective in plain clothes, was diving into courts and entries, and emerging again, like a bee from the bells of the foxglove. Morally and physically, the first *coup d'œil* of our district was grim and bleak.

Bleak in itself, bleaker by contrast. Heretofore we had, like the Shunammite, dwelt among our own people, in our country home where our fathers had dwelt before us. I do not say that the tenantry on the Radnor estate were all model men and women, nor the farms and homesteads round Radnor Hall altogether Arcadian, — far from it: but there comfort and neatness were the rule, not the exception; the old kindly feeling towards squire and parson and their families was not ashamed to show itself; the sick and aged looked for our visits as a matter of course, and brightened at our coming; they looked to us to share their griefs and joys, and in return took no small part in ours. Many a prayer from many a cottage hearth had "covered" our Crimean broth-

er's "head in the day of battle;" many a kindly good wish had followed our sisters when they went forth from Radnor to other homes; and when the "old squire," full of years and infirmities, and perfected by patient suffering, had fallen asleep, and the muffled peal from our gray church-tower told that he was laid with his fathers, many had sighed at the sound of that knell as though it had rung for their own kith and kin.

All this was left behind, and it was not unnatural, I think, that Abbot's Street and Crook Lane should appear to us, by contrast, dull and bare at first sight, or that we should feel, in school-boy phrase, "left out in the cold."

However, it was "*the* district," and that was enough. Mr. Helps, the senior curate in charge of this end of St. Edmund's large, poor, and crowded parish, had assigned it to us, and was at our side, pointing out its limits and the system on which it was to be worked. To buckle to it "right womanfully," and bring plenty of hope-seed with us, to grudge no trouble, and look for no visible result — that was our business. The thistle, duty, must be grasped with both hands, and in due time it might turn into a sceptre.

I am not going to dwell at any length on the mode of working prescribed to us, which was more practical than showy. Each Monday forenoon we collected money for the clothing-club, not receiving it in a school-room, as in rural districts is often and successfully done, but gathering

it from house to house, and thus establishing an *entente cordiale* with the inmates. We always introduced ourselves as workers under the clergyman, but were glad and ready to receive the proffered contributions of people of all persuasions, — in fact, to rescue every available farthing from the “Pig and Whistle,” and our seven other natural enemies, the public-houses. Every fourth Friday, we, in common with the other “district ladies,” made over our gettings (often very considerable ones) to Mr. Helps. If he was absent, Mr. Rayner, his brother curate — brother in heart, and hope, and aims — took his place. After the financial transactions were over, we stated to our clergyman any puzzling case that had arisen under our eye; and such did arise not unfrequently. Things “not dreamt of in our philosophy” at Radnor rose up like spectres before us here; children and adults unbaptized, and content to remain so; couples unmarried; stolen goods harbored, of all of which more anon. I believe Anne and I should have given way under this new and strange pressure, but for Mr. Helps. He was eminently what the French call *secourable*, clear-headed, uniting quick perceptions and feelings with depth and calmness; a capital organizer, working hard, and setting and keeping others at work; doing the right thing, and caring not who got the credit: —

“Yielding, nothing loth,
Body and soul, to live and die

In witness of his Lord ;
In humble following of his Saviour dear."

These gatherings ended with a kind of commentary from Mr. Helps on one or another of the books of Holy Scripture ; this he prepared beforehand with great care and research, bringing his remarks to bear on our sick-visiting and general intercourse with our poor, in a way that was truly useful. Before parting, he scrutinized any new books or tracts intended for parochial use, and often added a selection of his own to our stock. He advised us not to deluge our poor — especially the men — with books, even sound religious books ; their leisure for reading being so limited, it is wise rather to direct their minds to searching the Scriptures of truth for themselves, than to distract them with a multiplicity of imperfect human writings. The scores of vapid stories, flimsy little novels of a (so-called) good tendency, now printed for cheap distribution amongst the young, found scant favor in his eyes ; but sound, practical tracts, with *body* in them, he liked ; and, indeed, we found them both useful and acceptable. " Can you spare us the ' Two Shipwrecks ' another week, miss ? My Jem is quite took up with it ; " or, " You'll excuse the ' Three-fold Robber ' getting crumpled in Bill's pocket, miss ; he's a reading of it to the other tailoring lads at his shop in the dinner-hour." Such requests were not unfrequent, nor was it altogether a bad sign that when Mrs. Coppock, the self-complacent widow of an old

parish clerk, returned me the "Companion for the Aged," she said, stiffly, "I should hope, Miss Dutton, you didn't mean them remarks about peevishness and covetousness to come home to *me*, for I would have you know I never yet were reckoned peevish, nor covetous neither, by none of my acquaintance." The disclaimer of all intention to be personal, which I could honestly give, and the conversation that followed respecting self-examination as to our state before God, were not, I trust, without their use.

One word as to sick-visiting in the streets and lanes of the city. Its features wear a far sterner aspect here than in rural Radnor. Yet the town possesses some striking advantages over the country. Norminster Hospital stands within a stone's throw of the lower end of Abbot's Street, and thither nearly all accidents, surgical cases, or fever cases were moved at once. We petitioned for and obtained leave from the Board to visit our people there daily, if we chose. Other sick poor were visited gratis at their homes by a hospital surgeon. To us, the prompt attention they received, and the absence of that mournful ghost of a country laborer's illness, the doctor's bill, appeared immense boons; but I doubt whether they were as highly appreciated by the recipients. They mostly claimed them as a matter of course, and it was painful to see how many persons in receipt of large wages, or keeping flourishing shops, would apply for a "recommend" for a sick parent

or child, and think it a grievance to be gently reminded of their good position and ability to pay. Thus —

“ Ilka rose maun hae its thorn,
And ilka gleam its shadow,”

in this imperfect world,

Many of the aged or sick paupers were removed to the workhouse (whither also we had free leave to follow them), and there ended their days in comparative comfort. For “hard is the lot of the infirm and poor,” and squalid are their surroundings in a low district like ours. Some had no sheets, some no blankets — perhaps they had been pawned for gin ; some had no bed at all, only a shake-down on the floor. The air they breathed was seldom pure. The utterances that came up from courts and alleys behind their houses were often coarse and quarrelsome. The niceties you find in most country cottages — the clean check curtains, the house-clock, the polished chest of drawers — were unknown here ; and their food lacked the savory condiments which every cottage garden supplies, — the thyme and parsley, the onion and cabbage. The contrast often saddened us, and brought to mind that fine line of Cowper's, —

“God made the country, but man made the town.”

Well, nine years have passed over our heads since that first anxious survey of our new district. Abbot's Street and Crook Lane have long

been household words with us. To the eye of a stranger they look forbidding as ever ; but to us, each tenement has acquired its own peculiar interest, has made its own nook in our hearts. True it is that suffering and want and vice, and even crime have come before us in shapes not dreamed of before ; but everywhere we have met with some redeeming trait, some gleam, transient perhaps, of desire to be better, some “ touch of nature ” that “ makes the whole world kin ; ” and so, though far, far from forgetting our own people and our father’s house, though the green and breezy haunts of our youth are by contrast fairer and sweeter than ever, yet we would not willingly forsake this sphere of action for that. The “ garner of hearts ” is here as well as there ; if the shadows, here in the city, are deeper, the lights are brighter ; if the furnace of temptation is heated seven times hotter here than in a well-ordered country parish, so much the purer is the metal that comes forth unscathed from it.

Now look at yonder three-storied brick house, only one window in breadth, wedged in between the baker’s dwelling and that low-gabled beer-shop. There Abbot’s Street begins ; so indeed does St. Edmund’s parish, as the “ S. E. P.” let into the wall shows. Can anything look duller than that house ? No porch, no eaves, no light or shade on its surface. Its tiers of windows stare at you like dead, glassy eyes without lids or lashes ; the topmost one is partly filled up with

paper. That house, nine years ago, was occupied by a couple named Cripps, hard, griping people, who sublet most of the rooms, and eked out the low rents they obtained for them by a system of speculation on their lodgers. I mention this at once, because it has a bearing on the tale I am going to tell; but their guilt did not fully come out till some years later, when Cripps and a son were put in prison for more aggravated theft. The family afterwards disappeared from our parish. Mrs. Cripps was a well-favored, clean-looking person, with a fresh complexion and clear blue eye — “clear, but, O, how cold!” She always seemed glad to see me, and showed no annoyance when I turned the deafest possible ear to her many broad hints for gifts or loans of money. Three of her rooms were tenanted by three aged women, or rather by four, if we include in that category a widow of seventy-four, who tended a bed-ridden mother of ninety-three. This good old creature it was my privilege to visit, up to the very day of her peaceful Christian death. She and “the young thing,” her daughter, occupied a ground-floor room. Overhead lived Peggy, a bustling Welsh woman, with a little “self-sufficiency of her own” which raised her above want. Most impracticable was Peggy; she could not read, and steadily declined being read to; ignored both church and meeting-house, and never appeared either sick or sorry; so that one had no handle given one by outward circumstances to

get at her inward feelings. What a contrast to the occupant of the opposite chamber, where lay an insane woman waiting to be conveyed to the county asylum ! Mrs. Iliff had been a farmer's wife, and had known affluence ; but widowhood and poverty had come upon her, and sickness with fearful pressure on the brain ; she needed watching day and night, having once attempted to throw herself out of the window, and once to stab herself with a knife cunningly secreted under her pillow. Some kind ladies paid her rent, and a trusty person to look after her ; and as this person needed, of course, some hours' rest daily, we arranged to take our turns by Mrs. Iliff's bedside in her absence. The poor soul never attempted to hurt any one but herself, and a kind look or word generally calmed her at once ; so our task was no hard one. I well remember the soft, sad expression in her eyes, as she listened to the old familiar psalm tunes I crooned while plying at my coarse needlework in the darkened room. She never reached the asylum after all ; for while the authorities of " Magnus " and " Edmund " were disputing which should *not* bear her expenses there, the symptoms changed from violence to torpor, and she gradually sank.

One day, as I was leaving Mrs. Iliff, I was surprised to see a little old man, with white hair and shoeless feet, creeping up to the attic, tapping with his stick before him, as blind people do. Now, as the Crippses had four children, three of

them biggish boys, I had taken it for granted they occupied the two rooms in the garret themselves. Herein I did injustice to Mrs. Cripps, who, like John Gilpin's wife, had a frugal mind, and so contrived to pack in an extra lodger, at the expense both of health and propriety. She accosted me, as my eye was following the old man, and said, "It's only Miles, the blind soldier; he's very queer; he keeps to himself, and won't let anybody do a hand's turn for him, though he's as dark as a beetle. You never met him afore? Not likely, ma'am, you should; for he never crosses the doorstep but once a month, when he finds his way to the Castle for his pension; and last time he went that far, he got under the feet of a dray-horse, and must have been killed, if somebody hadn't picked him up! Has he friends? Not one: they preaching folks got hold of him at one time, and made a great piece of work with him; but he broke loose from them, and now nobody goes a-near him. He's very glum; only he likes my Polly to sit in his room (that's our three-year old); and she is desperate fond of the old man, and stops with him all day sometimes."

This was not an encouraging account; still my heart ached for the forlorn old man, and I thought I might at least give him the option of being visited and read to. So, two days later, I climbed to the attic and tapped at Miles's door, which stood slightly ajar. No answer, but a fidgeting within, and a shuffling of feet, and then the door

cautiously opened. A thin, wiry little man stood before me, very erect, with a look of gloom and sour mistrust on every feature ; there was "no speculation" in those sunken eyeballs, as they turned uneasily in my direction. Still not a word. I was taken aback, as we say here, and could barely muster courage to tell him my name, and my business there (which, at the moment, seemed no business at all), and to ask leave to come in. He still did not speak, but led the way to his neglected looking hearth, where he faced me again, without sitting down, or asking me to do so. I told him briefly how much I felt for his great calamity of blindness ; how glad I should be if I might read to him from time to time ; how much consolation my father, who had been similarly afflicted for years, had received from listening to the Holy Scripture. "I'm obleeged to you, ma'am," he replied, puckering up his thin lips and looking sourer than before, "but it would be of no use." I could not insist after so decided a negative as this, so unwillingly bade him good morning, merely begging he would let me know if ever I could be of use to him. I returned to the door, which I had incautiously shut to, behind me, and lo and behold ! the door possessed no handle, nor any apology for one ; and how to let myself out, it passed my ingenuity to devise. Feeling somewhat foolish, I stated this delicate dilemma to the old man, and was astonished at the revulsion it produced in his mind. The dormant chivalry in

some corner of his heart was roused ; he came to my rescue quite alertly, fumbled at the door, then asked me in a deferential tone to look for a knife that lay in a rubbish-box in a dark corner of his den. He inserted the knife in the hole where the handle should have been, worked it backwards and forwards, and grew quite friendly and communicative over the operation. At length, "by dint of coercion and great agitation," the door flew open ; I thanked him, and was retreating, when he detained me to say hurriedly, "You are welcome, ma'am, quite welcome ; and if you will condescend to pay me another visit, I shall feel honored." I put my hand in his, and received a cordial squeeze in return, and so our friendship began. The surly, defiant look passed from his face, never to return, leaving only an indescribable expression of sadness and hopelessness.

The main cause of this came out at our next meeting. Miles was of a morbidly anxious, nervous temperament, and blindness had brought with it deep dejection and the loss of most of his accustomed occupations. Then he had fallen into the hands of some fanatics, well-meaning, doubtless, but ignorant, and cruel in their ignorance, and they had persuaded him that his blindness was a proof of God's wrath, and that no prayer or effort of his could turn that wrath away, since he was not one of "the elect !" Poor old man ! with a burst of anguish he told me this, as a settled matter, from which there could be no appeal.

He seems, in his despair, to have broken loose from his tormentors, and shut his door against them ; but, like the wounded stag that crawls apart to die, he still carried the barbed arrow in his heart, believing himself "past help, past hope, past cure." It needed a firm, experienced hand to draw out (with God's help) that rankling arrow, so I referred the case to Mr. Helps at once. He sought out Miles, and many earnest talks they had together, with the happiest result at last. After long years of bodily and mental darkness, during which

"The cold spirit silently
Pined at the scourge severe,"

the old man had a door of hope opened to him. He was so crushed and broken-hearted, Mr. Helps told me, so shrinking and self-accusing, that he could hardly be brought to believe that no decree had gone forth against him ; but when once, by no mere earthly teaching, that frightful delusion was dispelled, and the way to the throne of grace made plain, his childlike joy and gratitude knew no bounds. Like Ready-to-Halt at the sight of Giant Despair's severed head, he could not choose but dance : and though he danced with one crutch still, yet, I promise you, he footed it well ! It was my happy office to read the Bible to him almost daily. These readings were the bright spots in his otherwise sad and solitary life. How every feature beamed with delight as he listened, and how fast the time flew ! The intervening hours,

I fear, still dragged on heavily for him ; but when spring days became warm and bright, I prevailed on Miles to array himself in his " Sunday's best," and be led by us to the daily prayers at the minster. A blithe young niece then staying with us was his guide, and her " early voice so sweet," together with the fact of her being a soldier's daughter, quite took his heart by storm. He grew chatty, told anecdotes of his early life, and described scenes he had witnessed in India, before the fatal ophthalmia had dimmed and then quenched his sight. He must have been well educated, and naturally observant and shrewd ; he clothed his ideas in such exceedingly picked and refined language as, now and then, provoked a smile. I remember his describing prettily the town of Meliapore, in India, where he had been quartered, and the chapel erected there over the probable site of St. Thomas's martyrdom. There were native Christians, he said, called St. Thomas's Christians, and they had churches not so very unlike ours, and church bells that sounded home-like in the valleys ; their clergy wore white robes, and had wives ; their women, unlike the Hindoos, walked freely about the villages and bazaars.

Miles was exceedingly attached to the memory of his mother, " a very pious woman," and talked with loving regrets of the cottage home in South Wales, where he was born and reared. He had not seen that spot for " nigh upon " sixty years.

The chanting in our old church, especially of the "Nunc Dimittis," quite overpowered him at first. He shed many tears, and afterwards said that, to his thinking, it was the gate of heaven indeed.

Still the old man's position was a distressing one. His infirmities were increasing upon him; and the more helpless he grew, the more was he neglected and cheated by the Crippses. One day, I found him quite broken-hearted over some fresh unkindness, the nature of which he could not bring himself to tell. But old Peggy below stairs was less reticent, and flew out to inform me that she missed five shillings out of the broken teapot on the shelf in which she kept her money, and who but Miles could have taken them? The Crippses had talked her into this belief for reasons of their own, that were "not far to find," and the obtuse old woman adhered to it, though she had not a shadow of proof to adduce, and though she was fain to confess that Miles had never wronged her of a farthing before. Her story gained no credence anywhere, and was indignantly rebutted by the two or three respectable tradesmen with whom Miles dealt. But the bare imputation of dishonesty was crushing to the sensitive old man.

Then it was that he owned to me that his dearest wish for years had been to end his days in Chelsea Hospital. Without raising his hopes, I applied to my brother, Colonel Dutton, and he

laid the matter before Sir Edward Blakeney, then Governor of the Hospital ; who, in consideration of Miles's blindness, granted him admittance to Chelsea within a month of that time. When I took Sir Edward's letter to Miles's attic and read it to him, he was much overcome, and sank on his knees. First, he solemnly thanked God for granting his desire ; then, kissing my hand, he prayed for a blessing on those who had obtained this boon for him.

There were some official papers to be filled up before Miles could be put on the list of in-pensioners, so, one fine morning, the old man was imported into our drawing-room, seated on a sofa, and plied with the questions those papers contained. Very quaint and entertaining were his replies, especially when the awkward inquiry came as to how many battles he had been engaged in ? He certainly could not, like Othello, boast of any "hair-breadth 'scapes in the imminent deadly breach." "It *was* humiliating," he said, with a comic air of distress, "to have to confess that he had never come to the scratch at all ! A scrimmage or two he had seen in India, but never an engagement." "But," he added, "that was my misfortune, not my fault ; if I had been brought face to face with the enemy, I trust, ladies, I should have done my duty." The next question, "whether he had been wounded," was easily disposed of. "How could I have been wounded," he asked, "when I never had the chance given me ?"

He lived about three years after that, and was very happy and peaceful at the Hospital: we several times visited him there. It was pleasant to find him sitting in winter, on the high-backed settle by a bright fire; in summer, on a rustic seat under green trees, chatting with his brother pensioners. He looked very picturesque and venerable in the cap and dark blue undress uniform he generally wore, but the full dress, with scarlet coat and cocked hat, was overpowering for one of his small dimensions.

“He is our model man,” the excellent superintendent of the pensioners told me, “irreproachable in every way, and never missing divine worship. He is liable now and then to fits of dejection, caused by his blindness; but a visit from the chaplain, or from one of the ladies who read to him, cheers him up.” That he might feel his helplessness the least possible, he had a small monthly remittance sent him, with which he paid such of his comrades as waited upon him. One or other of these veterans used to set down in writing his replies to my letters, often interlarding them with comments or anecdotes of their own, so that you may imagine they were not altogether very satisfactory or lucid epistles. One day, somewhat unexpectedly, we received from the kind superintendent the tidings of Miles’s death; a gentle, peaceful, painless falling asleep in the Everlasting Arms.

The grand old institution under whose shadow

his last days were spent, and near which his mortal part rests in hope, seems destined not long to survive him.

The baker's house, next door, has, like the "needy knife-grinder" of old, "no story to tell." The baker's wife — good-natured, slatternly soul — asked me in one early day, and showed a desire to "put in" to our clothing club, which might have resulted in the children's toilets becoming neater and less tawdry; but the baker himself nipped our friendship in the bud, by avouching in my presence that no stranger should meddle with his family arrangements. So, — every man's house being his castle, an axiom which district visitors are, I think, specially bound to respect, — I beat a retreat; nor has any opening for kindly intercourse since presented itself.

John Brent lives next door; he has for many years been the "right-hand man" of Mr. —, of Green Street. No man in Norminster is more respected than John. Honest, sober, intelligent, so much employed and trusted by his master that he is seldom at home, John ought, you would think, to be a prosperous, well-to-do man: but he is not; and why? I soon became acquainted with his wife, a pretty, dressy, sickly woman, with several children, one of them a cripple, and all wearing a strangely forlorn look. The house was a superior and well-furnished one, and lodgers of

a bettermost class were to be seen there at first, but after a while they dropped off. One missed a silver watch, another his Sunday coat, and not recovering them, they went away in disgust ; altogether, the impression I received was that Mrs. Brent's untidiness and dressiness were her bane, and that of her family. I tried anxiously to induce her to save her money and send her children regularly to school, but with no lasting success ; her attempts at doing better were spasmodic and short-lived ; yet it was impossible not to like the little woman, and her exceeding fragility gave her an interest.

After a while a fresh inmate appeared in the house, Brent's old mother—like himself, the picture of cleanliness, respectability, and honesty. She was all but helpless from paralysis, and her good son would not allow her, as too many “well-to-do” Norminster people allow their parents, to end her days in the poor-house. I fear, poor fellow, his dutiful care for his mother was frustrated, though by no fault of his. Widow Brent soon took to her bed altogether, and being “no scholard,” craved continual visits and readings. It was no cheerful atmosphere, that sick-room ; she felt herself *de trop*, neglected by her daughter-in-law, disobeyed and “sauced” by the young ones. I am convinced now that a development which she, but no one else in Norminster suspected, darkened the last months of her blameless life. When the youngest child, a pretty boy of three, died of a neg-

lected cold on his chest, to his father's utter sorrow, she looked at me with a strange meaning in her dark, heavy eyes, and said, — "Best as it is ; he's ta'en from the evil to come." It struck me forcibly, by the by, during the poor little fellow's suffering illness, that he clung to his eldest sister, but shrank away from his mother, and refused to go to her ; it seemed strange and unnatural. Things grew worse after he was laid under the sod, and one day the widow whispered to me, "I want to tell you something, Miss Dutton ; I *must* speak."

Glancing up, however, she saw one of the children perched at the foot of the bed, its round eyes fastened upon her, and, with a frightened look, she checked herself, only adding, "Another time : O, I *must* speak." This scene made me very uncomfortable, and first drew my attention to the circumstance that I was never left *tête-à-tête* with her ; the moment I entered her tiny room at the top of the staircase, a child was invariably sent after me, and as invariably left the room when I did. It was curious, to say the least, and made one suspect there was a screw loose somewhere.

I soon revisited the forlorn sufferer, and tried to raise her thoughts to higher and happier subjects than the petty annoyances of her fast waning life. But chapter and hymn only obtained a divided attention ; and suddenly raising herself on one elbow, she uplifted her voice, and in a tone of unwonted authority ordered the spy grandchild down-stairs. No sooner had it vanished than she

threw the other arm round my neck to draw me close, and repeated, "I must speak — I must!" But alas! paralysis and agitation so thickened her utterance that it was impossible to understand a word, and before I could calm her, Mrs. Brent was in the room, regarding us with stony eyes, and a hectic spot on either thin cheek. The aged woman sank back almost with a scream. I remained with her some time as a kind of protection, then went home, promising her a speedy return, and promising myself to refer this singular and mysterious matter at once to Mr. Helps. But the end was nearer than any one had supposed; the power of articulation failed first, then the brain became clouded, and in a few days she died. Her good son pinched himself to lay her decently in the grave by the side of his boy.

Not many Mondays after that I found Abbot's Street choked up with curious, excited gazers, and policemen passing to and fro between Mrs. Jones, the pawnbroker's, and Mrs. Brent's house. With breathless dismay I learnt that there had been an extensive robbery from a mercer's shop in the city; that a piece of rich blue silk, enough for a gown, had been brought by Mrs. Brent to Mrs. Jones, with a lame story of its being the gift of an affluent brother; that Mrs. Jones had, very properly, confided her suspicions to the head of the police, and that Brent's house had been promptly searched. To the astonishment of every one, it was found "crammed" with stolen

goods from garret to cellar, in every spot where the master of the house was not likely to detect them. The wretched young woman and her eldest girl had been examined at the police-office, the former displaying wonderful coolness and cunning in her answers, the latter wringing her hands in such an agony of grief and terror as quite unmanned some of the spectators. What a fearful web of deceit was then unraveled! And the saddest part of it was that the children had been trained to be apt accomplices, not only in shoplifting to a great extent, but in deceiving their upright, noble-minded father. Stolen goods were brought to that house from towns twenty miles off, advantage being taken of Brent's incessant occupations abroad to stow them away under his roof. The children were placed as sentinels to give timely notice of his approach, and more than once the thieves who were in league with his unhappy wife remained whole nights in hiding on his premises.

Jessy, the girl, was soon liberated, and on her return home devoted herself with praiseworthy zeal to her household duties. A long imprisonment has had, I trust, a beneficial effect on the guilty mother. Love of dress (she owned to me in the prison) had been the root of all this frightful evil. An elderly woman of depraved character, a denizen of Crook Lane, had aided and abetted her first attempts to possess herself of some article of finery by fraudulent means. Having thus

got Mrs. Brent into her power, she made a cat's-paw of her, and introduced her into a nest of thieves, threatening, whenever her hapless victim tried to shake her off, to reveal the whole story to Brent. Thus the indulgence of a seemingly venial fault led to a tissue of crime, disgrace, and misery.

The evening after Mrs. Brent's trial, which took place at the next assizes, her husband came to our house and asked to speak with me alone. There was something awful in his stern, repressed grief, and the lines of deep suffering on his pale, rigid face. But he said not a word about his own feelings ; he had come to speak of *her* and of the children. He was determined they should henceforward go regularly to day and Sunday school ; would I have an eye to his little girls sometimes ? As to *her*, she was his wife still, though a criminal, and when her term should expire, he had made up his mind to take her back and give her a home, and do his best to keep her straight ; perhaps if he had been more watchful over her, this might never have happened.

Thus did this right-hearted man, who had judged of another's truth and integrity by his own, try to excuse her by accusing himself ! I have seldom felt sadder than I did that night, as I watched him returning, with slow step and drooping head, to his worse than motherless children. Five years have passed since that interview, and Mrs. Brent is reinstated at home, and all things

appear to be going smoothly, but the look of care and sadness on her husband's brow remains deeply stamped. The children seem much improved; the Lord's day is strictly observed by them; in dark winter evenings their mother sometimes accompanies them to the house of God, but by daylight nothing will induce her to come forth or mingle with her former acquaintances. On one occasion only, I heard of her partially breaking through this reserve. "I have nothing for the club this week, Miss Dutton," she said one Monday last autumn; "I spent it on a 'cheap trip' with some of the children to Haseldyne, my birth-place, last Friday; I longed so to see the old place again." I was pleased with this touch of feeling, and inquired whether she had any relatives still living at Haseldyne.

"Not one," she replied, the tears starting into her eyes, and the burning blush into her cheeks; "I couldn't have looked them in the face if I had; but I *could* stand by my father's and my mother's grave" — A burst of weeping cut short the sentence.

A queenly-looking old lady, an octogenarian inhabiting the next tenement, received us with open arms. Shakespeare's proverbial line, "What's in a name? that which we call a rose," was not verified in this instance, for with Mrs. King our name was our passport. She proved to be a "Dutton legatee," one of several aged persons (all

dead now) who as freeholders' widows received an annuity of £8, bequeathed by our "fore-mother," Dame Dutton. We fell in with several of these widows, and very curious their reminiscences were of the old electioneering system, now a thing of the past — the days when seats in Parliament were contested, and gold showered down like rain, not from principle, nor even from party spirit, but from a keen longing for the distinction. Then Whig strained every nerve to unseat Whig, and Tory Tory; and the Trowtbeckes and Duttons spent (may I not say wasted?) thousands they could ill afford on this hereditary strife. Widow King, though oblivious of modern events, lighted up at the recollection of those stirring times. She described as occurrences of yesterday the chairing of Sir Eyles Dutton in 179—, and how he caught a hunch of mouldy bread thrown at him on the hustings, cut a slice with his penknife, and ate it amid the plaudits of the rabble! Widow Gill, another legatee, was a child in those days; but didn't she remember that hay-harvest when the county election was pending, and her grandfather had the handles of the hay-forks painted blue and picked out with red, the Dutton colors? Widow Coppock had *her* traditions too. She had kept a day-school sixty-five years before, and the *élite* of Norminster had attended it. Our famous clockmaker, now an elderly gentleman, who wears a brown wig and enjoys a European renown for his mechanical

skill, once lisped his alphabet at her knee and tasted of her correction. So did our leading upholsterer, and so did the last town-clerk but one! She delighted to tell how Sir Eyles and his three brothers, all tall and fair and free, used to walk round Norminster canvassing, and how she mounted her "Dutton" pupils on benches at the window to see them pass, and how Sir Eyles smiled at their red and blue rosettes, and the little "Duttons" hurrahed, but "the little Trowtbeckes sat still and looked sour!"

These humble chroniclers of old family anecdotes, as connected with county and city history, gave one curious glimpses into the life of the past century, and in particular into the reckless hospitalities of the Duttons to high and low; their packs of hounds and "mains of cocks," etc., entailing enormous expenses, poorly balanced by a little short-lived popularity, or by "Madam Dutton's" gain at a county race of "a £50 plate for the running of her gray filly, Timoclea."

The river of Lethe, says Lord Bacon, runneth as well above ground as below; and time, "the great winding-sheet that covers up all things in oblivion," is fast effacing every trace of the feuds and factions that convulsed Norminster sixty years ago.

CHAPTER II.

DISTRICT EXPERIENCES.

CONSISTENCY, we are told, is almost as hard to be met with as the fabled philosopher's stone. Yet what is a district visitor worth without it? It is a grave consideration that harm may be done—is done daily—by us district visitors, in as far as we fail to view our work in the right light, or to set about it in the right spirit. If we are harsh, if we are inquisitorial, if we are indiscreet in listening to “jangle,” or hastily acting upon it; if we allow ourselves in partialities or antipathies, or open our ears to flattery, or are spasmodic in our work — eager one week, flagging the next — these defects neutralize our efforts, and stir up much bad feeling, much impure sediment, in the hearts we desire to cleanse and sweeten. How much, then, do we lack wisdom! how incessantly should we seek it, “secretly, among the faithful, and in the congregation!” At Norminster, we are happy in having the opportunity of presenting our collective requests at the Throne of Grace each morning and evening, in our old Abbey Church, and of listening there to those Scriptures, without a right understanding of

which, we shall be as the blind leading the blind. Those "set, awful hours 'twixt Heaven and us," ought to help towards depth, and solidity, and humility, and shield us from the error we are often charged with, of "dealing in muslin theology" — a shallow, confident handling of sacred topics.

On the other hand, a constant, conscious leaning on the Divine Arm is needed, to save us at times from what an old writer calls "unprofitable sadness." What earnest visitor in the streets and lanes of the city does not sometimes start back appalled from the forms of vice that meet her? Can we see the ungodly forsaking his law, and not sometimes be "horribly afraid?" Nay, is not our belief in God's love sometimes harassed and distressed, if not liable to be unsettled, by the apparently wholesale ruin of souls we see in our worst courts and alleys? By prayer and supplication alone, with thanksgiving, can our cheerful trust in that love be maintained. We learn at his footstool that we are here not to speculate, not to despond, but to trust and to work; and we commit those souls to Him who knows their disadvantages, their temptations, their ignorance, their hereditary taints, and perhaps sees in them "some good thing" not visible to us.

"Then at the balance let's be mute,
We never can adjust it;
What's done we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted."

There is a young fellow, Joe Huggins, now serv-

ing with credit to himself on a line of American mail steamers, whose history has taught me to despair of no one. His father, a dissipated character, died several years ago in Crook Lane. I happened to be at a sick person's near, when I observed a hubbub at his door, and some women ran to call me in to Huggins, who had broken a blood-vessel. He was lying on the floor in a pool of blood; the wife, half-stupified with drink, was dangling rather than holding a baby in her arms, and two ragged little boys were staring at the scene and at the doctor who was busy about the sufferer. "No use prescribing for him here, Miss Dutton," said the doctor; "unless he's carried to the hospital at once, the man hasn't a chance!" But when this idea was propounded to the wife, she flew into a violent passion, and declared, with screams and sobs, she couldn't let him go; "she didn't care what the doctor nor all the doctors in the world said; he wur her partner, and from that house he shouldn't stir." The busy doctor, finding his reasonings vain, shrugged his shoulders and departed, leaving the virago on my hands. I happily bethought me of an old gentleman of some position who lived not far off, and sent for him. He came to the rescue with great vigor and complete disregard of Mrs. Huggins's maudlin sentimentality, and worked so well that we had the comfort of seeing Huggins safe in a ward of the hospital within an hour. There he spent the last

six weeks of his life in quiet, and amid good influences.

The widow "flitted," that is, changed her place of abode, as the discreditable and godless amongst our population are perpetually doing, and I lost sight of her for four years. She reappeared, in a house in a low court, within another low court, off Crook Lane. O the squalor of that den, and its inhabitants! — the mother, and the one hapless girl whom she had brought up to sin and shame, so dirty that you could neither tell the color of their garments nor of their skin; both had that abject, cunning, yet impudent manner of replying when spoken to, which one is at a loss how to deal with. The *ci-devant* baby was now a puny, 'cute-looking urchin of five, with face and hands deeply begrimed, and absolutely in sores for want of washing. A tattered smock was his only garment. The group was completed by a youth of twenty, very clean, and with hair cut short and smooth. He was lounging against the house-door, with a woe-begone, "hang-dog" look in his blue eyes, and the lines of starvation visible in every feature.

My object that morning and many others, was to obtain recruits from this wretched purlieu for an excellent "ragged school," lately opened in its close neighborhood.

Now little Jack Huggins, "and such small deer," were precisely the game I was after; so I greeted him and endeavored to begin an acquaint-

ance ; but the incipient Arab looked suspiciously at me, and ran for shelter to his big brother, clasping him tight round the knees with both his emaciated little hands. Such shyness being best dealt with by a little wholesome neglect, I now devoted myself to Joe, but could elicit little from him except that he had been out of work for many months, only getting a "job in the coal office," at very rare intervals. He did not grumble or beg, but seemed thoroughly crushed. It seemed strange that a "likely lad" should be unable to find employment, but, in my blindness, I never suspected the true solution of the enigma, namely, that Joe had been three or four times already in Norminster jail for theft. His last offense had been stealing some game at his mother's instigation.

I spoke to Joe at last about wee Jack, and tried to enlist his aid in getting him to school, describing the care, the kindness, the blessed teaching the child would receive there. Joe's pallid face lighted up at this, and he promised his coöperation with a heartiness quite unexpected. "O yea, *he* would wash him, *he* would comb his hair, *he* would put him in at the skewle door at the right toime, that he would ! Jack should get some larning, that he should !" and a look of strong determination gave his features quite a dignity. Meanwhile, it was amusing to see little Jack's face raised, in earnest attention to the dialogue on which hung his fate. The prospect of "skewle "

had no charms for him, that was clear ; but Joe's will was law, and must not be gainsaid ; and presently, when the agreeable prospect of two dinners a week provided at the school for well-behaved starvelings dawned upon him, his objections to learning seemed to melt away. It only remained to provide him with such raiment as was absolutely needful, and this I promised, on Joe's hearty assurance that he wouldn't let it go to the pawn-shop. " Now, Johnnie," said I, as we parted, " you are to come to our house with Joseph at six, and you shall have a little coat." " Oo aye, missus," was little Jack's prompt reply, with the most impish look and grin, " and see if I don't get a pair of trousers from ye too ! " and the urchin laughed in my face. It was not easy to refrain from laughing too, so comic were his look and gestures ; yet what deep tragedy lay beneath !

Jack has gone to school ever since — somewhat irregularly, it must be owned, except on dinner days. He looks you in the face now, and his face and hands are clean, types and tokens of some degree of moral cleansing, we will hope. By Mr. Rayner's advice, I requested a kind neighbor, a town councilor, to give poor Joe some stone-breaking to do, by way of testing his willingness to earn his bread honestly. " Quite useless, ma'am," was his sensible reply ; " I know the lad well — indeed, so well that he gets out of my way ; he's been too often in jail to stick to stone-breaking ; I'm sorry for him, for, bad as he is, he's the

best of the bunch, but he'll do no good as long as he's at home."

"What is to be done with you, Joseph?" I exclaimed, almost in despair, when that same evening the poor lad came to our doorstep for some broken victuals to still the gnawings of hunger. He lifted his head, and with a wistful, earnest look, answered, "Send me to sea, and I'll do you no discredit!" It so happened that the wind was blowing a hurricane at the time, and some elms opposite our door were writhing and bending in the blast. "What," I asked, pointing to them and to the fast drifting clouds, "could you meet such a storm and not wish yourself ashore?" "I could," he said, composedly, and the words have proved no mere bravado. Through the kind intercession of one of the magnates of Norminster, Joseph was taken on board one of the fine line of steamers already alluded to, the benevolent manager being, of course, made fully aware of his antecedents.

Mr. Rayner helped me to "rig him out," as he expressed it, for the region of icebergs through which he was to pass in that wintry season; he helped me, too, in the yet more important endeavor to break up the fallow ground of that young heart, and sow some seeds of divine truth there. Joseph never having been put to school, nor taught even his letters, oral instruction was our only resource. A most attentive listener he was: and the simple grandeur of the Bible words seemed to rouse and

rivet his thoughts. I shall not forget his awe-struck mien when hearkening to the 19th and 20th chapters of Exodus, the Law given on Mount Sinai with thunderings and lightnings and earthquakes. I had proceeded some way through the Ten Commandments, when he stopped me with the impetuous cry, "I never hear'd a word on all this afore, only droonkenness!" O that his ways may be made so direct that he may keep those commandments! So far he has done well; returned from several voyages with untarnished character, and brought me his wages with child-like simplicity, to lay out for him. He has a small nest-egg in the Post-office Bank; small, because I cannot, and perhaps would not, hinder him altogether from helping his thriftless family. After one of his voyages, he brought Jack (whom he had left ill) a costly rug from New York. Another time he expended a sovereign on his two other brothers, working lads, their mother having, as the kind woman they lodged with phrased it, "drank their boots, one Saturday night."

Joe's steamer is his pride and delight, his home, his world; and when, after his last voyage, he brought a photograph of himself, and sheepishly squeezed it into my hand, he expressed much regret that the name of *her* (the steamer), woven in gold threads on the front of his sailor's cap, "warn't big enough to be read in the picter." Poor fellow! the Helper of the friendless has indeed cared for him, and drawn him out of the

mire and clay, and ordered his goings. May so much love and mercy not have been bestowed in vain !

Look from the point where Crook Lane debouches into Abbot's Street, — at that one-storied house with sash windows and grass-green knocker. Thither would I transport you at once, with one glance only at the intervening house and the entry between it and Brent's. The house I never could glance at without a shudder, for a couple, "aged but unvenerable," dwelt and passed away there, absolutely enslaved by the demon of drink ; deaf to the loving admonitions of their pastor, "charm he never so wisely," deaf alike to the voice of conscience, the manifold warnings sent to them by a long-suffering God. The house has been pulled down lately, and I am glad of it. The entry is mostly peopled from the Emerald Isle. Madame de Genlis's dictum respecting negroes, that they are either "*tout bons, ou tout mauvais*," might apply to these nine or ten families. Some of them are as inoffensive, hard-working, and grateful folk as you could meet with anywhere ; others, again, as remarkable for brawling, drinking, begging, and telling unblushing falsehoods. The former class we are on very neighborly terms with ; and the trifling services we render them, in the absence of any gentry of their own persuasion, are received with a fervor of gratitude quite disproportionate to their value. Polemics we mostly avoid, not from indifference, but from a conviction that they are

scarcely within a woman's province ; nor do they obtrude them upon us. In fact, their main spokeswoman, Stasy Riley, disposed of all controversial difficulties between us one day in the most summary, manner, by exclaiming, "Och, darlin', where 's the odds betwixt us, save that *we* say Hail Mary, and *you* do na'?" We were fain to accept the germ of truth in Stasy's sweeping assertion, and look rather for points of agreement than for points of variance with these honest people.

To return to the house with the grass-green knocker, occupied by a notable Yorkshire woman, a Mrs. Creyke, with her tailor husband and five children. Two of the rooms were reserved for lodgers. About eight years ago, on my return from a week's absence, Mr. Helps told me that these rooms had been engaged for a lady, the widow of a medical man, reduced, together with her three children, to utter destitution. Her husband had practiced in England, then in Australia, and at one time made a good income. But the crash of an Australian bank (in 1856, I think) had swept away his savings. He had removed to the gold-fields, but soon after died there, at the age of thirty-five. The widow, up to the time of her marriage governess in a highly-connected family, had returned to England, and opened with energy and success a boarding-school for girls in a southern county town. But, alas! her health was undermined, and in a year or two her arduous

work had to be given up. Next she had been attracted by a Norminster advertisement, and tried a small day-school in one of our suburbs. But the fatal disease was gaining ground, and a chilly autumn so told upon her, that all attempts at teaching had to be given up. The Epsom Medical Charity generously granted her two donations of £5 each, but these were soon spent. Poverty deepened into urgent distress, and distress into want; happily, the true state of the case became known to the Rector of St. Magnus, and he raised among his parishioners a fund for Mrs. Fitzpatrick's immediate relief; her lodgings, often changed, and always for the worse, were still too costly, so she was transferred to Mrs. Creyke's, and the remains of the fund placed in Mr. Helps's hands for her benefit. All was done with the utmost care not to hurt her feelings.

I lifted the green knocker that November afternoon, not in the capacity of district, but of morning visitor. If some romantic imaginings touching the poor lady, prompted by the knowledge of her many misfortunes and her brave struggles, had entered my brain, they took flight in her presence, "mocked by the touch of life's realities." She sat in a high-backed chair provided for her use, a rusty black shawl dragged over her shoulders, a rusty black cap set awry on her head, a plate of oyster-shells on the table by her side. Her face, when she raised it, showed traces of beauty of feature and complexion, but the brow, knitted, and

lined with many furrows, and the irritable glance and fretful voice that scanned and addressed me, were chilling in the extreme. A tall, graceful boy of thirteen, who was lounging full length on the horsehair sofa, rose, however, and made up for his mother's shortcomings by the most profuse expressions of delight at my visit, couched in language worthy of Lord Chesterfield. Thus the ice was broken, and Master Gerald and I kept up the battledore and shuttlecock of conversation pretty briskly, Mrs. Fitzpatrick only putting in a few plaintive words now and then, in a breathless whisper. Somehow, the boy's volubility and overstrained precocious politeness did not please me, contrasting as they did with his marked rudeness towards his mother. When I inquired after the younger children, the poor lady roused herself to say querulously that they were so incorrigibly naughty there was no keeping them at home; they had already picked up some playfellows in Crook Lane, she believed, and had run off with them, out of her ken! Gerald ought to look after them better; he must go and fetch them in now. But Gerald was conveniently deaf to this injunction, and blind to certain "nods and becks" of mine, intended to strengthen his mother's authority. A pause ensued, broken by the sound of pattering feet. I looked through the window, and saw an elegant girl of nine, with long floating golden hair, flying hatless through the foggy street, with a rabble of rude Crook Lane lasses and lads at her

heels. Her face was sparkling with glee, as amid the noisy laughter of the others she sprang up to the knocker, and dealt a blow which shook the old house and the sick mother to their centres. The latter, with an angry moan, ordered Gerald to open the door : he obeyed, but so languidly that Mrs. Creyke had admitted the culprit and her little brother, and poured a volley of broad Yorkshire scolding on their heads, before Gerald was in the passage. I just heard Gerald say tartly to her, "Mrs. Creyke, how dare you speak so to Teresa? we are gentlemen and ladies, you know!" and then the little runagates entered, hand in hand, looking so charmingly fresh and sweet that my heart went out to them instantly. The little violet-eyed Fred peeped shyly at me from under his long dark lashes, and a friendship was about to ensue, when poor Mrs. Fitzpatrick, quite exhausted, ordered them to the bedroom up-stairs. Fred screamed and resisted, whereupon his mother bestowed upon him a passionate box on the ear, repented of as soon as given, and instantly followed by an equally passionate hug. It was a painful, uncomfortable scene to witness, and I rose to take leave. "Ah," she said, "you are like every one that comes to see me,—in a hurry to go; it was otherwise with me in my palmy days;" and she sank back with a bitter little laugh.

This first visit was of a piece with many more. Mrs. Fitzpatrick grew visibly weaker, and the oppression on her chest made it agony to speak

or move ; still she persevered heroically in coming down-stairs daily — to keep her eye on the children, she vainly flattered herself—in reality, to chafe the untamed little spirits of Teresa and Fred by sharp rebukes, and capricious orders she had no power to enforce ; and to confirm Gerald in the love of low company, and in habits of selfish cunning.

Mr. Helps partially remedied these evils by insisting on the trio attending our excellent National, Infant, and Sunday schools, and several kind ladies took turns with us in taking charge of them at our houses on Saturdays ; still there was much to be deplored in the management of these poor young creatures, and their very quickness and cleverness seemed to aggravate the mischief.

My diary in March says, “ A truly melancholy attendance : Gerald sly ; those pretty little ones daily wilder and ‘ spoiler ; ’ Mrs. F. eager that I should write appeals to her (or rather to Dr. F.’s) connections ; replies *most* unsatisfactory ! The ‘ one thing needful ’ seems in danger of being quite thrust out of sight by these pressing cares and miseries. Seldom can I introduce any reference to it, or get her to listen to reading : one comfort is, that she sometimes quotes with interest remarks made by Mr. Helps on the passages of Holy Scripture which he reads to her.”

O vain and arrogant stricture, as it seems to me in the retrospect ! What was I, reared in the

lap of peace and plenty, blessed with the golden mean between poverty and riches, ignorant of the bare meaning of those gaunt words, hunger, debt, pennilessness — what was I, that I should thus dissect a mind “sick with many griefs,” racked, strained, and goaded to the uttermost by all these things, and more? The sequel of this poor lady’s history shows that there was a work going on within her stricken breast which God alone knew of; its visible result was soon to appear and gladden our hearts.

It was not in Mrs. Fitzpatrick’s nature, evidently, to do anything by halves. When the hour came that the sinking frame could fight up against its weakness no longer, she quietly struck her flag, and folded her hands in calm waiting for the approach of the “last enemy.” Her passive self-surrender was as remarkable as had been the feverish stir of the last three months. “All of a wild March morning” she took to her bed, and never rose from it again. She asked me to make arrangements with honest Mrs. Creyke for the expenditure of her weekly stipend; she even empowered her to control the young “destructives,” and was rewarded for this great effort by a visible improvement in their behavior. She was now so enfeebled that it became expedient to engage a respectable nurse-tender, who lived hard by, to wait upon her. Though low and homely, the little bedroom was scrupulously clean, and furnished with many comforts by several ladies who deeply

compassionated Mrs. Fitzpatrick. With what a restful feeling did I visit her now ! There was the poor, weary head lying calmly on its snowy pillow, the brown hair just touched with gray, braided smoothly back, the forehead no longer puckered with the lines of irritability and carking care.

And little Teresa and Fred, no longer frightened and bewildered by those alternate bursts of anger and tenderness, might now be seen nestling up to mamma, and laying their rose-pink cheeks against her sunken and pale ones. It was too much for her sometimes, and her paroxysms of anguish at leaving these little ones behind were heart-rending to witness. One day their clean clothes were brought in, and Nurse Dawes laid some small garments of Freddy's at the foot of the bed. "Take those little things away," she whispered to me, in a tone of intense misery ; "I cannot bear to see them." Another day, when preparing to receive the Holy Sacrament, she lifted her hands and cried out, "Am I, O, am I fit to meet my Lord and Master, when my mind is distracted for my poor children?" But the heavenly promises brought to her memory by good Mr. Rayner, who was present at the time, had a powerful effect in calming her. She no longer shut herself up in bitter, hopeless reserve ; the "fount of tears" was happily unsealed now, and after an agony of weeping, she was generally more hopeful and calm than before. We came to

an explanation, too, which tended to relieve her mind. The Fitzpatricks, she said, were proud, and had never "got over" their son's marrying a governess; but when she was gone, she felt sure they would relent, and take charge of Gerald: to complete his education, and put him out in life, would be the extent of what they could do, for it seems they were as poor as proud. This negotiation I promised to undertake, if spared to do so. The two little ones might, by the united efforts of those who took an interest in their mother, be placed in orphan asylums; and I ventured, after much thought, to cheer the dying woman with a solemn assurance that no stone should be left unturned to accomplish this. Her look of ineffable relief is before my mind's eye yet. "One thing more might I ask?" said she. "Might Gerald follow me to the grave?" I promised this, too, and that he should not stand there alone, poor boy; we would accompany him, God willing. "Then," said she, sinking back on her pillow, "I have nothing left to do but to fly to my Father's arms! Dear friend, dear sister, read me a chapter from the Gospels; the struggle is over now."

Mrs. Fitzpatrick lived ten days after this. Her sufferings seemed much relieved by the recumbent posture, and the rest and warmth of bed; in fact, she made so great a rally that the hospital surgeon whom we had called in thought it possible she might linger for months; and Nurse Dawes and Mrs. Creyke looked at each other and at me

ominously, the latter not disguising that she was heartily tired of "the concern," and especially of Gerald's insolent, deceitful ways, and flat refusals to do as he was bid. Clearly, however, the poor lady could not be moved, so there was nothing for it but to do one's best, day by day, for both parties, husbanding our small resources as far as was consistent with the sick woman's comfort. She, poor soul, knowing nothing of these difficulties, was growing quite cheerful and light-hearted at times, and really lovable and engaging. I think her mind was now much occupied with a review of her past life: she seemed to like clothing these recollections in words; so, while knitting for hours by her bedside, only pausing occasionally to put to her lips a draught of milk or wine and water, I obtained a very vivid and thrilling idea of her adventurous career. She had been early left an orphan, with a younger brother Fred, and a child-sister, Louisa. They both died very young: Fred was the apple of her eye, evidently; indeed, she could not speak of him without dangerous agitation. In her boxes I found, after her death, exquisite water-color drawings done by him: one of a wood with a primrose-studded bank in the foreground, another a sea-piece, were disposed of for considerable sums for the benefit of the orphans. I have in my possession letters from Mrs. Fitzpatrick to Fred, which it would be difficult for any one to read unmoved. She was, as I said before, governess in a highly-connected family, trusted and be-

loved ; but she expresses her willingness to give up that position, and become a daily teacher, sooner than see Louisa unprotected. "If I can help Lou," she writes, "it will make me far happier than anything would that merely benefited myself. Dear Fred, as you truly say, I am not rich, else I would not dole out help to you so scantily : do not use the word 'pay,' for it implies a debt. I only wish my love for you paid back in similar coin. When I am in want of money, if you have any to spare I will accept it, but not as a debt. I have known your generous, loving spirit from a child. May disappointment never break it ! may celebrity and riches attend my dear brother, and enable him to gratify the wishes of his kind heart ! My own dear Fred, none will rejoice in your success more than your Dora."

Her marriage had been one of true attachment : three years after it, some friends in Australia, then at the height of its gold-digging fever, persuaded the young couple to join them. I keep, for the benefit of his children, a document signed by the passengers on board the *Martin Luther*, thanking Dr. Fitzpatrick in earnest terms, "for the care, diligence, and professional skill" which he had shown during the voyage to Port Phillip. "Those were bright days, indeed," sighed the widow ; "with my husband at my side, and my boy in my arms, no queen so happy as I !" Their pecuniary prospects were cheering, too, for doctors rapidly grew rich in the colony then. Diggers, verifying

the proverb "Light come, light go," were prodigal in the fees they bestowed on their medical advisers; the lucky adventurer who threw away forty pounds on a "shiny gown for his missus," did not grudge twice that sum to the Æsculapius who prescribed for her successfully. So the Fitzpatricks put by large sums, but lost all, as I have said. Sad, sad is the sequel of the story. Dr. Fitzpatrick went to the diggings, eager to retrieve his losses; and his wife, already detecting in his hectic color and short cough the signs of incipient consumption, braved much hardship rather than be parted from him. With tearless eyes she described their life under canvas, beneath the burning summer skies of Victoria; the hum of busy, excited thousands, all seeking for "*they* bright things that lie thick as carrots underneath the 'arth;" the wild ecstasy of some, the gambling, the reveling, the ruin and despair of others. Night brought no quiet there, no respite from murderous brawls and orgies, which the scanty police could not take cognizance of; there her husband toiled on, but a few ounces only repaid his exertions, and but for his professional earnings they must have starved. Then came the days and nights of rain, and the weary, heart-broken man worked on, often up to his knees in water, till a violent fever laid him low. A little hut on the edge of a majestic forest of iron-bark trees was their only refuge. There little Fred was born, truly a son of sorrow; and there his father died,

conscious at the last, able to trust his widow and fatherless ones to God, and so depart in peace. She told with straightforward simplicity how, in his dying hour, he had thanked her for her wifely devotion, and said, that "her rectitude had been his best earthly stay, when all other supports had failed." He lies under the purple shadows of Mount Macedon, in the iron-bark forest, whose magnificent trunks, fluted with the exquisite regularity of Doric columns, form a vast temple to their Creator's glory. No clergyman was present to say the words of peace over the dead, or baptize the new-born child. An itinerant preacher, who was passing by that remote spot, was called in to perform the latter office for the delicate infant, its little life apparently hanging by a thread.

A subscription amongst the open-hearted and open-handed diggers defrayed Mrs. Fitzpatrick's return to England. Her narrative at this point strongly reminded me of an unpublished remark of Dr. Johnson's, handed down through Mrs. Garrick to a dear old friend of mine. It was announced one day in his presence that the recently widowed Marchioness of Tavistock had died of a broken heart. "Had the Marchioness of Tavistock," said Dr. Johnson, "kept a chandler's shop, she would *not* have died of a broken heart!"

Mrs. Fitzpatrick's "chandler's shop" was that boarding-school I have mentioned: by it she supported her children till disease of the lungs forced

her to give it up. When her powers of teaching failed, she painted and drew for a livelihood; when illness put a stop to that, she made artificial flowers, or cut out paper decorations for grates. It was harrowing to see, amongst the few effects she left behind, these tokens of increasing pressure and decreasing strength. Who could wonder at any amount of irritability or exactingness of temper in one so afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted?

A great peace, and a growing appreciation of the “exceeding precious promises” of Scripture, were granted to the sufferer as time wore on. “‘It is I; be not afraid,’” she murmured after me one evening, — “how beautiful that is! *Can* words be more beautiful?” And again, when, seeing her color quite fade away, I paused in the midst of a Gospel chapter: “Read on; as long as *you* are not tired, *I* delight to hear.” The hymn, “Sun of my soul,” heard for the first time, touched, yet soothed her, wonderfully. One day, after lying still with folded arms a good while, she said, “Do you think I shall see Mr. Helps again?” I shook my head; he had been called away to his distant home by a sudden, heavy affliction, and his absence might be indefinitely prolonged. “Then tell him I die trusting alone in my Saviour’s death and merits — feeling myself most unworthy.” She uttered these words very slowly, then added: “Tell him I thank him for his kindness, not as a friend only, but as God’s servant sent to me.”

Little Fred now rushed in, and climbed on the bed for a caress : "Dear little man," she said ; " he *had* become very rough, but is recovering his gentle ways by degrees ; he has good abilities, I think, and will learn well." It was most thankful to hear this calm allusion to her darling's future. She played with him, smiled upon him, smoothed his dark hair playfully. She glanced archly towards me at some quaint saying of Nurse Dawes, whose professional talk about "shattered" nerves and "*pecurial* symptoms" frequently brought Mrs. Malaprop to mind.

That was the last flicker of the lamp. It was a Saturday, and the noisy flow of market people and carts passing her window was incessant. Mr. Rayner had visited and prayed with her ; she had afterwards begged me to read to her parts of "that beautiful Litany, where no one is forgotten !" The last tears those grief-worn eyes were ever to shed, had flowed softly over the petition for fatherless children. At six, I had gone home for an hour, leaving Nurse Dawes in charge ; but before seven a motley group of Abbot's Street girls and boys stood at our hall-door, forming a kind of guard of honor to the sylph-like little Teresa. She, poor child, pale and quivering, could only whisper, "Mrs. Creyke says mamma is dying ; please come." A glance at Mrs. Fitzpatrick showed that she was indeed in the heart of the shadowy valley. "Is this death ?" she had asked, rather of herself than of the women who stood

around her. The door and window were set wide open, and the cold, darkening air streamed in to help her breathing. She once pressed my hand tightly, but it was evident her communings were no longer with earth, and that awful craving for absolute quiet which the dying often manifest was upon her. Once only she raised her hands and eyes, and prayed, "Come." The women stood aloof, and I watched by her pillow; no one spoke; the children were kept quiet in the kitchen below. A candle in the far corner of the room was left to struggle as it might with the night wind. I saw the stars coming out here and there, and thought she would soon be beyond them; but though there was comfort in that thought, a weight like lead seemed to press on my heart, and made each minute seem an hour. It was her utter loneliness and her dependence on strangers for the last offices, I think, that caused that dreary, chill feeling. A light footfall on the stair caught my ear, and I saw, with great thankfulness, a lady enter who had been, from the first, foremost in acts of loving-kindness to the widow. She told me afterwards that poor Gerald had roamed as far as her house in the restlessness of his sorrow, and that, on hearing of his mother's sinking state, she had instantly come to join me. Together we waited the end, in stillness and speechless prayer; the deep-toned minster bell had not long ceased its nightly tolling at nine o'clock, when the end came. It was preceded by an act which, though trivial in

itself, was very characteristic, from its rapid decision and energy. She faintly asked for "water," and some was brought, cold from the pump. I was holding the glass to her lips when she grasped it firmly, raised it above her head, and dashed its whole contents over her brow. A few moments more and the spirit had fled. "Thank God," Mrs. Atherton softly said. "A more desolate soul never passed away," were the words that rose to my lips. Then, as we gazed on, my friend added, "How young she looks, and *how* pretty!" I softly closed the poor eyes that had so often waked to weep, then followed Mrs. Atherton to the kitchen, where Gerald was hanging about, looking white and miserable, and the two little ones, sleepy and bewildered, were sitting on the knees of kind neighbors. The sad truth was soon told, and the wail that rose from the orphan trio, as its full purport broke on their minds, really cut us to the heart. For a time, we could only weep with them; then, the morrow being Sunday, we bent our thoughts to needful arrangements for their comfort. Gerald was to sleep at some respectable people's next door. A bed was extemporized for the little ones in the parlor. We undressed them and heard their prayers; and never shall I forget the pathos of those childish white figures kneeling at our side, nor the mournful cadence in those treble voices as together they chanted, "Our Father, which art in heaven." It was the cry of the fatherless indeed.

The further history of these orphans does not belong to the "Streets and Lanes of a City," so we will dispose of it briefly. As Gerald's mother had predicted, the tidings of her death had a mollifying effect on the Fitzpatrick relations, and they at once took charge of Gerald, engaging to complete his education, and set him up in business. He is still with them in a far distant county, and we keep up a regular correspondence, for the sake of his young brother ; we hear of him also from the clergyman of his parish, who would fain be his friend and counselor ; but "life is thorny, and youth is vain," and the temptations to self-indulgence are strong around him, and find, we fear, a ready response within him. "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel ;" these words describe him but too truly now. May he be led to seek for stability and strength at the hands of Him without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy !

Teresa and Fred were left absolutely destitute, no barrier between them and the Union but the tender mercies of Norminster ; and most tender those mercies were. Money flowed in as soon as their needs were made known — more than enough to maintain them for eight months under the roof of a couple who showed them parental kindness. Meanwhile a vigorous canvass was set on foot on their behalf, and before the anniversary of their mother's death, they were each of them happily

settled in a noble Orphan Institution near London.

So general was the feeling of commiseration excited by their case, that the widow of an opulent tradesman, unknown even by name, both to us and them, left a small legacy to each orphan in her will. How at her death that will was disputed, and how Mr. Helps, Dr. M ———, and myself were subpœnaed, and had to appear in the Probate Court at Westminster to give evidence upon it, and how the matter was settled by compromise, as most matters are in this world, need not be dwelt upon here ; for assuredly such doings are no necessary, or ordinary, offshoot from district work.

Fred, now a “senior boy,” is receiving an excellent education ; he seems full of promise in every respect, is perfectly happy at school, and enjoys his yearly holidays at Norminster, which he calls “home,” and loves as a home.

The dear, fragile Teresa passed through her school life with an irreproachable character. She and Fred always met for their holidays in Norminster, and clung to each other with a peculiar love. She spent some weeks under our roof, when about fifteen, in order to be instructed for Confirmation by Mr. Rayner ; and very sweet and modest and conscientious she was. There was much reserve and diffidence in her nature, and some tendency, I think, to melancholy. Deep in her heart lay the remembrance of, and the yearn-

ing after, her mother, and after that other grave in the Australian forest. She loved us intensely, as her eager obedience, her watchful care to save us trouble, and sometimes her close, clinging embrace, testified ; and Fred she loved with a tender devotion, which had something of grave, quiet motherliness about it : but her heart's most earnest human longing was after her parents ; and He who knoweth our frame, and well knew hers to be unequal to the burden and heat of the day, lovingly called her before it was noon, to share the rest of those weary ones. In her sixteenth autumn she meekly received her First Communion, kneeling at our side in Norminster Church. Her second and last was administered a few weeks later to her by Mr. Rayner, on her death-bed. She had faded like a leaf in the interval ; she was spared all acute pain, distress, or fear in those last days. She "knew she was going to mamma, and she was glad to go," she said, "and she hoped Gerald and Fred would be good and come too." Day by day, her hopes and aspirations after a love better than even mother's love kindled and burned more clearly, and resting on it she calmly passed away with her hands in ours, and the Name that is above every name on her lips. Dear child ! every remembrance connected with her is pure and peaceful. "Fair, fair, with golden hair, under the willow she's sleeping ;" and near her sleeps the mother to whom her faithful little heart had clung to the last.

So that brick house with the grass-green knocker is associated in my memory with much of the poetry of life : indeed, the thoughtful district visitor will meet with gleams and flashes of poetical feeling everywhere, save where confirmed, unblushing vice, like a mephitic gas, has extinguished them.

Yonder tall, gaunt woman, who stands with arms akimbo at her door in Crook Lane, could thrill you through if she chose to speak, for she is one of the few survivors from the well-remembered troop-ship *Birkenhead*, lost near the Cape with her freight of gallant soldiers. Once, unasked, Betty opened to me on the subject ; her homely words sketched powerfully the seething sea, the helpless women and children “shoving off” in boats, the parting cheer from perishing husbands and fathers, her own Sergeant B—— amongst them — silence after that, and the noble fellows sinking, sinking, as still as a stone, into the heart of the sea. Awful recollections to brood upon ! but to Betty their sharpest sting lies in this, that whereas she, like her husband, had been a “decent body and good liver” then, her life has been an evil one almost ever since ; not, however, without sharp twinges of conscience, which Mr. Rayner tries hard to turn to good account.

Here we close our district “experiences,” fearing lest they should become, as Hotspur says, “tedious as is a tired horse.” Before proceeding to the kindred theme of sick-visiting in the work-

house, let me say a word about our "mothers' meeting." Here Anne and I, whose districts though side by side are wholly distinct, have the comfort of working together. Here we have the help of zealous friends, especially Mrs. Meade, whose cheerful coöperation has, I think, saved the undertaking from collapse. Now, by dint of a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether, it is, thank God, doing well. The mothers flock in; some of the roughest and coarsest are visibly softened; hundreds of yards of flannel and calico have been paid for, and made up on the spot into clothing for themselves and their families; several of their big girls, whose idle, lounging habits used to make us fear the worst for their future, have been induced to go to service, and are doing well in respectable situations. In fact, the mothers' meeting seems to act as a magnet, and attracts such of the women, both old and young, as retain some desire to do right. The books read to them, and the carefully selected hymns which they join with us in singing, have certainly produced a purifying effect on some of their minds.

CHAPTER III.

AMONG THE SICK-POOR.

THE proverb, "Extremes meet," is not the less true for being trite. That the extreme of modern civilization touches on barbarism, no one acquainted with our crowded towns will deny. But the proverb is nowhere more fully borne out than in the day-rooms of our city workhouses. Which are the most corrupt of the many corrupt ingredients that ferment there, leavening more or less the whole lump, however unremittingly the authorities of the place may strive to repress evil? It is not the once hard-working but now broken-down cottager, not the toiling man or woman that could never earn more than sufficient to keep the wolf from the door, and now justly claims parish help for his or her last days. No; the scum of its population will be found to be inmates who have received a high-class education, been put in the way, at some time of their life, of realizing a good income, held advantageous positions, perhaps in the middle rank of society, fared daintily, clad themselves expensively. These, when through self-indulgence they have fallen (and self-indulgence, we know, is the perilous incline down which myriads

slide into vice, fraud, or excess), fall low indeed. I have seen such persons, when over and over again rescued by some relative from their degraded position, and put in the way of retrieving their character and circumstances, slip back in a few weeks into the quagmire of vice, and return to the workhouse, all manly or womanly feeling, all self-respect, gone ! I have seen such, been called upon, as you shall presently hear, to mix with them at trying times, and can conceive nothing more repulsive, more base, than their deep-grained selfishness, varnished over with an affectation of superior breeding. These inmates — not the rough, ignorant, but honest poor — are the plague-sore of our Unions, turn the title of House of Industry into a satire ; make its roof an Upas shade, deadly to the boys and girls reared under it. “ I would not,” said a keen observer, “ insult a Red Indian by comparing him with such as these ! ”

One such “ sinner, destroying much good,” came under my notice in connection with district work, four years ago. Wylie was a man of some attainment, capable of holding a clerkship, quick-witted, and well-spoken. But he addicted himself to vice, leaving his wife and four children to starve or beg. It was as a sick-nurse that poor Mrs. Wylie first came in my way ; I saw her again, laid up with a fever she had caught in her vocation, and which proved fatal. The children had no home but the Union, their worthless father being in jail for some fraudulent act. They were pretty

little creatures, but dwarfed by lack of nourishment and warmth, so two of the little girls drooped and died early. The only boy soon followed them, passing away, however, not in the poorhouse, but under the roof of a former master, who with rare kindness took him to his own home, cherished him till he died, and laid him in his own burial-place. So, of the whole family, only Wylie and little blue-eyed Becky remained. I never failed to look after Becky in my periodical visits to the Union school; but one day Becky was not to be seen, and in answer to my inquiring looks, I suppose, a dozen little paupers volunteered the information that "her was gone! her fayther's toime (in prison) wer hup, and he had coom blackguarding, and taken Becky away." No one could tell whither. "He had cut his stick, and gone on the tramp with Becky, and an orgin, or summut!" So Becky vanished from our horizon, and, do what I would, no trace could I obtain of her. The thought of this delicate child of five dragged from place to place by her bad father, ill-used, taught to beg and whine and tell lies, in order to fill his pockets and minister to his vices, haunted me, and, in my blindness, I often wished her at rest in the pauper's grave with her mother and little sisters.

I had strongly enjoined the children to let me know, should Becky be heard of, and one day, eighteen months later, the desired tidings came. Becky was in town with her father, quartered at Lowe's lodging-house in Spitfire Yard, off Green

Street; they had turned up unexpectedly the night before (Thursday), and Wylie meant to be "off again Saturday." There was no time to be lost; so flinging my previous programme of morning's work to the winds, I bent my steps to Spitfire Yard, maturing on the way a long cherished plan for Becky's rescue.

I found this lowest of our low haunts in a state of uproar beyond even its wont. A dense mob had closed round one of the dwellings, their attraction being a drunken man, who was trying to batter down his mother's door. The terrified old woman, it seems, had locked herself in, and her calls for help, mingled with his threats and oaths, made a hideous din. I was thankful to hear somebody say that somebody else had run for the police, and presently a boy called out, "Mind yourselves; here's the Bobbies a-coming!" I meanwhile mounted a doorstep, and sheltered myself in a large kitchen where two or three women were bustling about. A man in a threadbare coat of fine cloth, with a greasy velvet collar, sat with his back to the door at a large table. A capacious tin inkstand stood before him; the table and window-sill were covered with written sheets of paper drying, and his pen was flying glibly across another similar sheet. Glancing over his shoulder, I saw at once that they were copies of some sort of petition, such as are frequently left at the doors of the rich, and extract large sums from the credulous, indolent, uninvestigating portion of the char-

itable public. "This must be Wylie," I thought, not without trepidation, as my glance was met, and then shunned, by a sidelong look from those hard, cunning eyes. He noiselessly pushed away his literary effusions into a corner, then stood up and faced me, reeking with bad tobacco and spirits. I felt that Becky's fate hung on this colloquy, and tried, like the cupbearer of Artaxerxes in his great strait, to dart a thought upward to the "God of heaven," and commit all to Him; He, who is not willing that one little one should perish, would perform the cause I had in hand.

The woman of the house was civil, and, in reply to my inquiry, pointed out her lodger as Wylie. I told him that having been informed of his flying visit to Norminster, I had come at once to ask after the welfare of his little girl: "Might I see the child?"

"Assuredly I might," he replied; she was playing about somewhere, he would step out and fetch her. I watched him diving amongst the rabble that still choked up Spitfire Yard; Becky, it seems, was there, enlarging her mind by studying human nature in its worst aspect. He soon returned with her.

Becky had been described at the workhouse as so much out of health, that I was prepared to see a pale, emaciated starveling, not the broad-faced, cherry-cheeked little personage that now came to my knee, smiling from ear to ear at the sight of an old friend. Too hastily accepting her plump,

rosy looks as indications of strength, I expressed satisfaction at the child's appearance, to which the father replied with a sardonic smile, "No wonder, ma'am, she looks well, when I've just been taking her a tour in the agricultural districts." These were his very words; a nearer inspection, however, changed my opinion, and showed that poor little Becky was swollen and almost dropsical; the flush in her face was unnatural, the soles of her feet were hard as horn from tramping barefoot on the highways, her blue eyes were heavy and bloodshot. "Touring about in summer may be all very well," I said, "but it is October now, and the early deaths of your other children should be a warning to you to house this one before winter. She is old enough to go to school, and would it not be far better for her than this vagrant life, where little good and much harm may be picked up?" Of course Wylie had a hundred excuses ready — his poverty, his inability to give her a home or pay for her schooling. I expected this, knowing him to be a desperate character, hardened by dissipation, and indifferent to his child, except in as far as he could make money by her; but it seemed right in the first instance to try persuasion, to turn the heart of the father to the child if possible, as much for his sake as for hers. This endeavor failing, I had another arrow in my quiver, more likely to hit the mark. There is in Norminster an Industrial School — "Ragged" would be too great a misnomer for it

—admirable in its order, and in the parental kindness of its master and matron towards the inmates. Here the younger Fitzpatricks had been boarded for many months, and thriven wonderfully both in body and mind, and here I had already obtained leave to board Becky (though below the regulation age), should she turn up in our town and need a shelter. If the wretched father could only be induced to leave her there for the next six months, it would be something gained ; some seeds of good might be sown in the little heart, some care taken of the little body.

So I laid the proposition before Wylie, and when he found that it involved no sacrifice on his part, he seemed to incline a favorable ear to it. A hint which I was able to add, that certain influential persons in the city had their eye upon him, and that if anything happened to Becky the consequences to himself might be awkward, clinched the matter. “Becky should go to this school,” he said, “and the sooner the better ; but he hoped I would consider the child’s feelings : she was as loving as a pet-lamb, and would be much distressed at parting with him ; he hoped he might visit her occasionally at this school ? ”

“As often as you please,” I replied, well knowing that the meeting of parent and child was never objected to in that institution, under due *surveillance*. “And now, Mr. Wylie, no time like the present. I will call a cab and take Becky to her future home at once, if you please ; and you

shall come too, and judge for yourself whether it will not be a happy home for your child. Be kind enough to pack her things at once."

"Pack her things!" cried Wylie, with a grin; "why, bless you, she's nothing in the world but what she stands in — pack her things, forsooth!" and he laughed loud and chucked Becky under the chin. Concealing my disgust as far as might be, I led the way to the next cab-stand, and installed Becky on the seat opposite to me. Wylie mounted the box; I had managed to warn the driver to look to his pockets while sharing his seat with so questionable a fare. Little Becky's ecstasies at the drive, the shops, the novel position altogether, were quite enlivening to witness; but I remarked that the few words she uttered were in a deep, hoarse, unchildlike voice, which made me fear that her chest was affected. We reached the school, with its pleasant garden-plot in front, and were greeted by the matron with that frank smile which wins all hearts to her. I explained my errand in few words, and noted her tender greeting to the little stranger, and how Becky clung to her and nestled by her side at once. So the matter was settled; Wylie presently took his leave with much affectation of reluctance to part with his child; it was painful to see how she shrank in evident fear from his embrace. I left the little one quite comfortable with her new guardians, and walked blithely home, filled with thankfulness for this unlooked-for success. One drawback alone

remained ; the fear lest Becky's father, missing her as a source of gain, should return by and by, and take her away. This fear was shortly after done away with, for Wylie was lodged in prison for felony, and the magistrates at once added Becky to the list of "certified" children, thus securing her from being meddled with by her worthless father. She is still at the school, "under the protection of the Secretary of State," and a promising, sweet-looking, and very good child ; her health, long delicate, is mending ; her warm heart and cheerful temper make her the pet of all, and whatever trials may be in store for her when the day comes that she must leave this haven of peace, she is receiving such an education as will fit her to bear and overcome them.

Our tie with the workhouse hospital and widows' room waxed closer year by year, as many of our district friends were drafted there. Other denizens of Abbot's Street, young persons, perhaps, of whom we had hoped better things, cropped up from time to time in that hospital, to our utter grief, with health and character blighted. These needed all our care, and (the staff of visitors under the chaplain being woefully inadequate to the work to be done) we could not exactly confine our feeble ministrations to them, but tried to help as many as could be attended to, calmly and thoroughly. The master and matron, Mr. and Mrs. Lomax, were always ready to give us the benefit of their experience, and to back us in our efforts.

So too, as long as she remained in Norminster, was Grace Oakley, the daughter of a deceased clergyman. She lived near the Union-house, and, renouncing society, which she was singularly fitted to adorn, worked steadily in this and other rugged fields of duty. Even with her help and the Loaxes one was often at a loss to judge correctly of the characters and circumstances of the sick folk congregated under that roof. Poor creatures! mostly strangers to us and to one another; some of all creeds, and some of none; some victims to the profligacy of their so-called betters in the social scale, sad and bitter of heart; others blithe and reckless of the morrow as little children. We have seen a scoffer in one bed; in the next a fervent, single-hearted Christian, "having nothing, and yet possessing all things." We have been plied by one aged widow with whispered petitions for "a noggin," while in the opposite bed lies another, in her ninety-sixth year, thirsting for the Water of Life and for that alone. "Read to me of *His* coming," she says; "O that it might be this night!" And another day: "I have been dreaming all night of *Him*; He stood in his brightness by a river side, and the river sparkled like silver, and his saints and angels were round Him; I could tell the saints by their long flowing hair," etc. Dear old Widow Rose! this dream was only the reflection of her waking meditations; no enthusiast she, but one who had feared the Lord from her youth: "a reg'lar church body,"

she playfully called herself, and the assertion was verified by her intimate acquaintance with Collects, Liturgy, and Psalms in the Prayer-book version. Begin where you would in any of these, she was sure to know the strain by heart, and murmur it after you. I never in any rank met with such an instance of clear-headed, warm-hearted piety at so great an age. "She's a right-down good old woman," says the nurse of her ward, "and so thoughtful for me; if she's in ever so much pain at night, she won't let me be waked." And another of the widows says, "I've known Mrs. Rose fifty year — a stirring, striving body, and the goods she sold was always good and always reasonable."

But I must not linger on this refreshing theme, nor detain you amongst the widows in their neat ward, the bed-ridden ones lying cozily under crimson coverlets, the more able-bodied sitting "croose and cocket," as their kind nurse says, round a bright fire. Nor must we tarry long in the old men's ward; but we will say a cheery word or two as we pass to well-meaning, ignorant old Kit, who lies there blind and paralyzed, and "glad of a word frae ony decent body." Ask how he is, and he will tell you he "feels verra dillicat; he don't look to be better, nor better off i' this world, but he do hope there'll be a nice corner keepit for him up *there*." Just glance at that half-wit who sits in the elbow-chair by the fire; he looks, and is, a rustic, born and bred not far from Radnor. He is an odd compound of shrewdness and simplicity: the for-

mer quality predominated in a memorable reply he made when reproached some years ago for not shedding a tear at his only sister's funeral: "Hur is i' heaven, and I've no handkercher!"

Let us pass on to the men's accident ward. There is an individual there whose mysterious case illustrates life in the streets and lanes of our cities; so we will pause by his bedside. In order to reach it we must pass through that court-yard where scores of pigeons are disporting themselves round the pump-trough, or rising to the wing at our footfall. Those pigeons are as dear to me as the "iridescent" doves of St. Mark were to the writer of the "Stones of Venice." As they peck contentedly the crumbs thrown to them in this abode of penury, then rise in graceful circles above its roof, above all the sadness and squalor, into the summer air, they seem to read me a parable. They are types of many a happy soul that has accepted its lot within these walls with patient acquiescence, and in due time winged its flight to the abodes of perennial sunshine and rest.

Look at that narrow couch in a corner of the accident ward. It is empty now, but for seven months a young fellow, whom we will call Leonard, lay stretched upon it in such extremity of pain that our workhouse doctor, though accustomed to such scenes, could at times scarcely bear to look upon him. Leonard was a Londoner, a stranger in our northern latitudes till one autumn morning in 186-. A laborer, going to his work in the twi-

light, heard groans proceeding from a spot at the foot of a steep cliff that overhangs our tidal stream. There he found a tall, slight lad lying in helpless agony, having fallen over the cliff. Help was procured, and he was carried to the Norminster Hospital ; meanwhile, on examining the ground where Leonard had lain, it was found strewn with house-breaking tackle, not of the most artistic make, but such as clearly to show the poor lad's present occupation. It was supposed at first that he had intended to break into a lonely dwelling that stands upon the rock, but this was not the case ; he seems to have attempted a house in the outskirts of Norminster, and finding himself in danger of detection, to have fled across country, rushed through a fringe of bushes, breaking boughs and twigs as he went, and fallen headlong five-and-twenty feet at least. Conceive what he must have felt on waking from the swoon which followed this plunge, and finding himself alone in the dark, sure of detection, writhing and helpless, with the conviction that the young life and wild activity within him were quenched forever ; and all this without one glimmer of faith or hope to make it endurable, one inkling of the guiding Hand that even then had not forsaken him. No wonder that his goings-on, the two months he remained in the hospital, were more like those of a hurt and captured wild animal than of a rational being. He returned only evasive or insolent answers when an official inquiry was instituted into his doings that night.

He met the patience and indulgence of matron and doctors with scanty thanks, and to Mr. Rayner, who, in the absence of the usual ministrations, tried to work upon him, Leonard seemed truly "the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears." A couple of very "fast" looking young men came down from town to see him one day, bringing him "lots of tin," and the ward was more astonished than edified by the three talking and joking together in a "lingo" unintelligible to every one but themselves. When they were gone, Leonard sank back in sullen despair, glaring at the visitors who from curiosity, I fear, lingered near his bedside. How he writhed under their inspection no one guessed at the time, but I remember his telling me in the workhouse that "strangers used to come and stare at him as if he was a villain; and though he was bad enough, he wasn't *that*!" Poor boy, his notions of right and wrong were hazy indeed! He was so young, so full of vitality, that he lingered much longer than the doctors had thought possible, and so after many weeks he was moved to the workhouse. In looking up a pauper from Crook Lane one day, I found Leonard laid on that narrow couch in the corner. Narrow though it was, it was wide enough for him; for, the spine being paralyzed, he could not have the relief sufferers so dearly prize, of tossing and turning about. O, the bloodless hue of that young face, girlishly fair as it was, with soft brown hair, and eyes of the color of the speedwell in June. I hesitated whether

to accost him or not, for we were complete strangers to one another. A friend whose advice is law to us had recommended our not going near him in the hospital ; the lad was too "cocky" already ; got more notice and spoiling than was good for him ; it was truer kindness to keep aloof. Here the case was far different, as the nurse (a hard, bad woman, sent away in disgrace afterwards) remarked, "There would be no great ladies, nor grapes, nor tidbits for him here." So seeing his large eyes following me wistfully, I paused to inquire how he was — I feared in much pain.

"I'm all pain," he replied, with that hopeless look that often since has cut me to the heart ; "and I'm so lonely !" A pause ensued.

"Then would it be a comfort to you if I were to come from time to time and visit you ?" I suggested.

"It would."

"And when you are tolerably easy, we will have some reading ?"

He nodded assent, shaking back the damp hair from his forehead ; and so the intercourse began, which for seven months gave me food for thought and deep anxiety. It was a trying, fitful kind of intercourse. At times he grew quite confidential, and told enough of his history to show that he had had a wild, godless, reckless bringing up. His mother (we have since ascertained) was a habitual drunkard ; his father, and at least one brother, belonged to a London

gang of burglars. They lived in great luxury usually ; salmon at 5s. the pound, and the earliest vegetables from Covent Garden, were no uncommon delicacies with them. Leonard had often had "as much as £30 in his pocket:" how obtained did not transpire. He had picked up a fair amount of education, and read a good deal, mostly in the Jack Sheppard and comedy line ; but he was not devoid altogether of better knowledge, had parts of the "Pilgrim's Progress" at his fingers' ends, and alluded sorrowfully to a time when he had been fond of attending the London "churches and chapels." From a child he had been brought up to live on excitement : for that, far more than for gain, he had thrown himself into betting, gambling, and racing ; for that, I verily believe, he had tried his 'prentice hand at housebreaking, for he clearly did not care for money for its own sake. Whenever mysterious remittances dropped in to him by post, he sowed his largesses broadcast among the paupers ; so he was rather a favorite with them, in spite of his imperious temper, aggravated and stung by pain. An intense contempt for meanness was one feature of this strange, contradictory lad, and he could hardly tolerate the presence of Nurse Hobbs, the woman alluded to before, who certainly was a revolting mixture of cheating and cant. Now as to our readings, it was harder than you can conceive to fix the attention of one so *blasé*, so utterly "used up."

The chaplain did all for him (and the other sick) that the claims of a curacy and of pupils would admit of; and sometimes Leonard listened and begged him to go on, but as often he pettishly shut his eyes, and said he couldn't bear to be spoken to — it went through his head; and then no wonder the chaplain was disheartened. More than once he dismissed me and my book on that plea. And who that looked at his ghastly coloring, and the dark lines under his eyes, could consider it altogether a frivolous and vexatious one?

I found such readings as the "Rocky Island," Monro's "Dark River," or "Anecdotes of Christian Martyrs," most effective at first in rousing Leonard's attention. He was not blind to the beauty of "Golden Deeds," — nay, at times grew boyishly eager in listening to such narratives. By these steps we gradually mounted to the point whence we could contemplate the King of Martyrs Himself, his atoning death, his life of divine holiness, mercy, and purity. Not seldom some word of his would rivet Leonard for the moment; and an earnest Amen would testify how heartily he appropriated the suffrage petitions from the Litany, with a few of which our readings generally closed. These were his happiest moods; more often there was blank listlessness, or a disposition to chat about the merest trifles, or to discuss at great length his own symptoms or the preparing of his food. This last was a

fertile topic, kind Mrs. Lomax winking at certain small cookeries that went on at Leonard's own expense, under his own eye ; so I often had to bide my time, and work my way to the one matter of vital importance through a disquisition on fish-sauce, or the best way of stewing a beefsteak.

There was a buoyancy about Leonard that seldom let him realize his dying state ; the love of life was strong within, and when at times the conviction that it was ebbing burst upon him, I have seen him fling the sheet over his head and weep long and bitterly. At other times he was wilder in his mood, like a bird in the snare of the fowler, fluttering and dashing itself in vain. I think, however, his spirits grew more equable, and his mind less utterly afloat as time wore on.

One day he pulled a letter from under his pillow, and begged me to read it. It was from his only sister, and his face lighted up as he talked about her. Agatha had married at sixteen, after rejecting, by her brother's account, as many suitors as Penelope. She was barely twenty now, but had lost her only child, and was heart-broken in consequence. Her husband worshipped the ground she trod upon, but he was little at home (Mr. Lomax thinks he is an adventurer devoted to the turf), so she led a lonely life, and brooded over the loss of her little boy. "She's a very pretty young lady," Leonard said in his quaint parlance, "and as good as she's pretty, and many

a bow and smile I've seen her get as she has walked through Bishopsgate with me."

The genuine brotherly feeling made up for the pomposity of these details, and I read Aggie's letter with interest. It was indited in a flowing hand, its spelling and grammar perfect, its contents artless and sad. She was longing to see her dear, dear Leonard; she had sent him a money order, all she had; she was so glad he had a friend to read to him, and she begged him to return to his Father in heaven at once, for she was sadly afraid his time must be short in this world; she hoped soon to see him, her husband having faithfully promised to bring her to Norminster; they would take a lodging near, and she would sit with him every day.

Some weeks later I unexpectedly found Leonard not alone. A coarse-looking, expensively dressed, middle-aged woman sat by him, whom he named to me as his mother, and a small, child-like figure in mourning was bending over his pillow. This was Aggie; you could have told them to be brother and sister by the great likeness, only her face was rounder and less blanched. She said little, the mother taking all the talk upon herself, but there was a world of expression in those sad eyes, and they swam in tears as she timidly pressed my hand. Leonard lay looking at his sister wistfully, but placidly. He pressed me to remain with them, but I soon took leave, first entreating the mother and sister, in his hearing, *not*

to distract, but rather to help him in his preparations for the solemn change that awaited him. The mother replied in a proper and feeling manner; Aggie's soft eyes expressed her acquiescence, and so I left them to themselves. The next evening I believe they returned to town, but the pure sisterly influence had not been used in vain, and Leonard was visibly calmer and more thoughtful afterwards. I am not saying that he was a model penitent — far from it. Would that he had been such! There was irritability to the last. Seldom did he express the sorrow for past sin or the aspirations after holiness, which yet, I trust, were no strangers to his breast. One had to take comfort from his earnest entreaties for the 51st Psalm, or the Litany ejaculations, or the story of the Prodigal. One was thankful to learn from good Mr. Lomax that his talk, though often trifling, was never vicious, or corrupting. I gladly treasure up his dying assurance that he bore ill-will to none, not even to Nurse Hobbs, who had taken his few remaining shillings from under his pillow. These straws I would fain hope indicated that the current of his thoughts was running in a right direction. He had no tinge of presumptuous security about him. "I am praying, O so hard!" were his last intelligible words, that bright day in May on which he died.

With characteristic eagerness, he had sent a second messenger after the first to hunt me up in Crook Lane, and say the end was near. In un-

consciously Shakespearean phrase the messenger said, "Leonard was sinking — sure to go at the turn of tide ;" and so he did. I found him perfectly conscious, longing to be "prayed with." In the unavoidable absence of the chaplain, I recited passages from the Psalms, and brief suffrages from the Prayer-book, at intervals, and he joined heartily ; only once a troubled look came over his face, as Nurse Hobbs planted herself in front of him, and he said sternly to her, "Leave me." She left the room, quite cowed for the moment, and did not reappear till all was over. "Leonard," I whispered anxiously, "you quite forgive ?" "Quite," he answered, carrying my hand caressingly to his icy lips, and keeping it there while the breath came more and more slowly and fitfully ; "go on, please." O, the look of anxiety on that young brow ! He spoke no more, except those few precious words that I have mentioned, about "praying, O so hard !" The tide was now ebbing fast, and so was the life, and by six o'clock all was still. The workhouse inmates, usually callous to such events, were, I scarcely know why, deeply stirred by sympathy, or curiosity, or both ; groups of them hung about the court-yard, eying his window in shuddering silence. The cooing of the many pigeons sounded like a lament, as I wended my way home.

Poor boy ! poor Leonard ! That headlong fall over the cliff was surely ordered in "kind austere-ness" to save him from inevitable vice, perhaps

crime. "There is mercy in every lot:" there was mercy in his, though so deeply mournful when looked at in the light of this present world only:—

"Fear startled at his pains and dreary end,
Hope raised her chalice high,
And the twin sisters still his shade attend."

He was buried handsomely, as we say here, his brothers sending a liberal remittance to Mr. Lomax for the purpose. None of his kith or kin were present, nor have they been heard of in Norminster since. I obtained Agatha's address, and wrote to her after the funeral, but my letter was never acknowledged, possibly never received.

CHAPTER IV.

A CHOLERA SEASON.

THERE lies on one side of Norminster Hospital a pleasant open space of two or three acres ; it is bordered on the west by a double row of elms, through which the autumn sun often glints red and round at its setting. Beyond these trees stands a picturesque, broken-down tower of the fourteenth century, wreathed in ivy. This inclosure has been called the Plague-field ever since the year 1615, or thereabouts, when Norminster was desolated by a terrible pestilence. In the old records of the town may still be seen payments made on behalf of "the poor cabiners," that is, the plague-stricken inhabitants who were moved from their homes to huts built here on the "lazzaretto" principle for their reception. Within a stone's throw of them, a large pit was dug for the hasty interment of the plague's many victims. After the epidemic had cleared away, this trench was bricked over, and neither it nor any part of the field has ever since been built upon. We have often looked out by moonlight on the Plague-field, with solemn thoughts of the high and low, rich and poor, one with another, whose dust is mingling there.

The visitation of sickness I am about to speak of, compared with that former one, is what good Bishop Hall would have called "a mere flea-biting;" yet it, too, has its "sadness and its story."

The last time that cholera visited England, the Norminster guardians resolved to prepare for its approach betimes. There being no spare room in our old, crowded workhouse, they obtained from the kindness of Lord Kendal, the "Marquis de Carabas" of our county, the loan of an old farmhouse as cholera hospital. It stood by itself, inclosed by a wall and protected by strong gates, in a field overhanging our tidal stream. A straggling row of low-class dwellings skirted one side of the field, a crowded churchyard bounded the other; it was disused, and a crumbling arch or two of an old chantry gave it a solemn interest. On the opposite side of the stream, some hundred yards from the extemporized hospital, rose a high, rocky bank, crowned with handsome suburban residences of some of our magnates. Here due preparation was made in the summer of '66 for the expected scourge, or rather for such of our paupers as it might attack. The building, which Lord Kendal was intending shortly to pull down, was repaired, whitewashed, fitted up, and supplied liberally with medicines. The nurses — "aye, there's the rub" — the nurses were to be denizens of the workhouse, picked out as more able-bodied and quick-witted than the rest, but untrained and unprincipled. I say this advisedly, for when Anne and

I compared notes with Grace Oakley touching this matter, we found that each of these *soi-disant* nurses was individually known to us as persons of more than doubtful honesty and sobriety. Conceive what it would be to trust such with stores and stimulants, and with the precious, endangered lives of parents and children, husbands and wives — at a time of general panic, too, for deep was the alarm with which Norminster awaited the coming epidemic. It could not be thought of ; Grace, bright and determined, had, we found, already offered her services as nurse to the guardians, and been joyfully accepted. With my mother's permission I followed her lead, and met with a cordial response also from the parish authorities.

Still the cholera came not ; sultry summer had come and gone, and still it menaced from afar, like a thunder-cloud on the horizon. Not till late in September did a lightning flash issue from that cloud, and strike down one of the wealthiest and busiest of our fellow-citizens ; next a woman died in Spitfire Yard, and two more within a day or two, and a conviction crept over the hearts of all — “ the plague is begun.”

Two days later a pencil note from Grace apprised me that our work had begun also. “ Cholera Hospital, nine o'clock A. M. — Just arrived : three patients brought in : come at once.” Without tarrying to confer with any one, I set out, taking the first cab on the way. The streets were soon left behind, and the disused churchyard with its ruins,

and we drove heavily along a cart-track deep in mud from several days' rain. I alighted at the outer gate of the farm, crossed a yard surrounded by farm buildings, now empty, and entered the kitchen. The house, the whole locality in fact, was quite new to me. "Nurse Nanny," from the Union, was busy there over a caldron ; and as with outstretched iron ladle she pointed me to an inner room, she might have personated one of Macbeth's witches. The sight of Grace's fair, serene face was cheering, and together we entered the "cholera ward." No gloomy spectacle met my eye ; four whitewashed walls, alive with black beetles, a table, a stove, some chairs, and six little white beds made up the *coup d'œil*. Three of the beds were occupied, and on approaching them I saw three curly, sandy little heads placidly reposing on their pillows ; three freckled, childish faces, the image one of the other, looking comfortably drowsy from the soothing medicines that had been administered. It was a brother and two young sisters who had all been stricken down together in a house, the cellar of which stood several feet high in water. They were dear, good children, most easy to nurse, and their symptoms, though undoubtedly Asiatic, were not virulent. They all got well and went home in a month, but the boy, Willy, volunteered after that to come to us every Saturday (his holiday) ; and manfully did he work, sweeping out our court-yard, or chopping up our wood.

When evening came, Grace announced her intention of sitting up this first night, and proposed that I should "go home and sleep soundly," so as to be able to relieve her the following night; by thus taking turns, we should husband our strength for the campaign, whether long or short. So reasonable a proposition could not be gainsaid, and home I went, after changing my clothes, and washing face and hands. I was to relieve Grace at seven in the morning. •

Raindrops lay heavy on the rank grass, as I crossed the field at the appointed matin hour. No one was about, so I proceeded to the ward, and saw with satisfaction that the three freckled little faces turned towards me had improved in coloring. But what was Grace about? I saw her standing at the foot of the furthest bed of all, watching intently. Hearing my step, she came up to me, her face white but composed, and said, taking my hand, "Amy, is this collapse or death?" We stood by the bedside now. "Death," I answered, after a pause; death, unmistakably manifested by that marvelous steely hue peculiar to cholera, which had never met our eyes before, and which seemed to darken and assume a more metallic blue as we looked. The story was soon told; Mary Howard was a young married woman (the husband, a good-for-nothing), and lived next door to the little red-heads. She had been brought in at three, already in collapse, from which neither hot applications nor stimulant could rouse her.

Thus had my dear colleague met the first fatal onslaught alone. From that moment there was no going home any more ; the plot thickened, and "cases" came in, sometimes singly and at intervals, oftener in groups of three or four, for ten weeks. Some of the latest cases were as virulent as the earliest had been ; and the disease vanished quite suddenly and completely at last. Now I am not going to harass you with a detailed account of the doings of those momentous ten weeks ; it would be useless to harrow up your feelings unnecessarily.

A few dissolving views of our cholera wards are all I wish to bring before you, selected with an eye to our main subject, the "streets and lanes of our city," and the best manner in which a woman can, without permanently renouncing her home ties and duties, try to do some lowly but real work amongst them.

A large, low chamber at the other end of the farm, not available for hospital purposes, was appropriated as a bedroom by Grace and me. A faithful servant looked after her creature comforts. Anne undertook the commissariat department for me, and daily hovered like a good genius round our walls, bringing home-letters and cheering messages, and lovely bunches of roses from a kind nursery gardener, who said, "They might perhaps cheer the ladies." Above all, she brought good reports of our mother, who continued well and peaceful in her and H——'s companionship.

We were fortunate in Mr. Lomax's steady support and help, and in that of our Union doctor, who had sole charge of the little hospital. He visited us morning and evening, often quite exhausted by his outdoor work, for cholera was rife in the close alleys, and many patients obstinately refused to be conveyed to the hospital, averring that they would be poisoned or buried alive there. Of course it was a grave responsibility, being left to our own guidance so many hours, but we had complete instructions given us, and a variety of medicines and all appliances and means, to boot ; so there was nothing for it but to act for the best. We kept the women employed in kitchen work for the sick, in washing clothes and sheets, in scouring with disinfectants ; but the nursing by day and night, the administering of medicines, brandy, or food, we took upon ourselves ; only we made them help with the friction, which the poor, agonized creatures seemed to find relief in, and which some of them could scarcely bear suspended for a moment.

Our most stringent rule was, never to be absent from the patients at the same time ; sometimes the services of both were needed through the night, but in general at ten o'clock, punctually, one of us went to bed till daybreak, unless roused sooner by the knocking at our outer gate which preceded the arrival of the stretcher. It was hard, very hard sometimes, to tear one's self away from some poor sufferer at the crisis of the attack,

but at such times feeling must not be indulged at the expense of common sense. Indeed, I used to think that I was turning to stone ; for after the refreshments of hot bath and brief devotional reading, I used to lie down and instantaneously fall asleep, regardless of the tragedy enacting downstairs, regardless too of the hosts of insect assailants brought in by the poor creatures from their low haunts, which under other circumstances would have "murdered sleep." That curious instinct which nurses acquire of waking at a previously specified moment never failed either of us. More than once, indeed, Grace or I jumped up, prematurely startled into consciousness by a red blaze shooting into the dark sky before our window. The women were burning a straw bed, its occupant having died ; this was done, as often as possible, before daybreak, to elude the notice of the townspeople, whose nerves were naturally shaken by these funereal fires.

A friend of ours, indeed, who lived on the opposite side of the stream, was often startled by these fires. She confided her alarms to a sensible old aunt. This good lady's reply is well worth recording : " Eat plenty of mutton chops, my dear, and read the 91st Psalm every day."

Thus we learnt that another dear soul had passed away since we left the ward, but many hours might elapse before our colleague had leisure to give, or we to ask, the mournful details.

Acceptable gifts of clothing, wine, and brandy

were sent by the kind townsfolk, as soon as they knew that we were installed. The shirts and shifts were invaluable, for not a few patients were brought in in a revolting state, after lying twenty-four hours or more ill and untended. I possess still the huge scissors which Anne brought to facilitate the operation of shearing away these loathsome "Dejaniran" garments. They were flung into the court and set fire to at once, for in them, if anywhere, infection resided.

After the first day or two, our hands were full ; scarcely had we laid poor young Mary Howard in the rude mortuary chamber, clasped those fingers that would not stiffen, and braided her splendid masses of black hair into a natural crown, than her two little boys were brought in. Three other patients from the same locality were installed before night. Either confirmed drunkenness or bad drainage accounted for all these cases. Little Tommy Howard struggled through cholera, but sank under the secondary fever. We made him up a snug bed on the floor ; but ten times a day he would stretch out his arms and cry, "Grandmother, grandmother, coom and tak' me, and carry me round the toon !" Then I used to pick up the little creature in his blanket, and pace slowly through wards and kitchen with his heavy head on my shoulder ; and Tommy seemed quite satisfied, and would doze off in the belief that the kitchen was Norminster, and I was his grandmother.

As the plot thickened, we found it necessary to draft our few convalescents to a room up-stairs. It was spacious, and open to the roof-timbers, and commanded a pleasant view. With texts on the walls, and plenty of books and pictures about, and a heavy curtain hung up to screen off the air from the staircase, it looked quite habitable. Our only trouble was that its inmates sorely needed watching and food for their bodies and minds, and a controlling eye over the young, and reading and loving persuasion for the elder ones ; and who was to do all this ? We could not attempt it ; and the almost daily visits of our parochial clergy, though invaluable, were necessarily brief. At this juncture a note was brought, which gladdened our hearts greatly. It was from a lady, a kindly and unwearied worker amongst the poor at her end of Norminster, offering heartily to come to us at once for "day-work." In a few hours Marianne Barnard was one of us, inaugurated as autocrat in the convalescent ward, and a centre of order and cheerfulness there. She afterwards took an active part in the night nursing, devoting herself to it till the end, with one interval of illness from over-fatigue and strain of mind, and one of arduous cholera nursing in another place.

It was hard to lose three patients in twelve hours, as befell us one early day. Later on, we had the grief of seeing five sink between sunrise and sunset. It was evident in most of these cases that their doom was sealed before they were borne

through our gates. More like a nightmare than a reality comes back to me an incident that closely followed these two groups of deaths. They had left our numbers thin, and not a single anxious case on hand, so (Mrs. Lomax having sent a better class kind of woman to sleep in the convalescent ward) Grace and I, for the first time, both went to rest. I lay down partially undressed, and was instantly asleep: soon after midnight, however, the gate was loudly knocked at. We ran down without delay, and admitted the *cortége*; it was no pauper, but a very well-dressed figure that was lifted from the stretcher; she "belonged to bettermost people," the Inspector said, and her clothing and gold ear-pendants testified to the fact; but her belongings had been seized with such abject terror at the sight of her attack, that none of them would go near her. The case being reported to the Inspector, he had paid a domiciliary visit to the house, and amid the cries and wailings of the family (not one of whom could be induced to lend a helping hand), he had escorted her here at once. Though spent and speechless, she was conscious, and seemed soothed by hot appliances and encouraging words; with touching patience she tried to swallow the prescribed medicines; yet more readily did she drink in the versicles from Psalms and Litany we recited in her moments of respite, turning her hollow eyes in the direction of the speaker, as though craving for more. This went on for half-an-hour, and

then brief, sudden collapse, and then rest. Within an hour of that first "forceful knocking" at our gate, the ward was once more dark, still, and empty. Before the funeral, which took place next evening, a deputation of her "friends" came and begged to speak with Grace at the gate. The object of their mission was to claim the poor thing's ear-rings, which no one had thought of taking out. Grace at once repaired to the mortuary chamber, unclasped, and brought them; a piece of complaisance the petitioners scarcely deserved.

There were several of these rapid cases. Others lingered long. We have peaceful recollections of an elderly woman, rough but kindly, who bore her protracted suffering very patiently and humbly, and seemed less concerned for herself than for her "old man," the partner she had "made her moan to, these forty year." He used to sit by her for hours, stroking and patting her hand, while "tears ran down his cheeks like winter drops from eaves." Only when, at her desire, the Curate of St. Magnus came to administer the most comfortable Sacrament to her, the old man shook his head, and walked sadly away. A large portion of "cases" came out of that parish of St. Magnus, part of which lies very low. Its clergy, together with Mr. Helps and several more, proved themselves true "sons of comfort" through this visitation. The Bishop of the diocese, too, came to pray by our sick, leaving them and us with the blessing of peace warm at our hearts.

The Roman Catholic priests visited their flock assiduously : wherefore I know not, but so it was, that no other denominational teacher appeared in the hospital at all.

We were all very fond of fatherless Johnnie, whose mother had deserted him, and gone to America. He was a gentle boy, and a favorite in the workhouse, where he had been reared, and Mr. Lomax was so kind to him ! He had pulled through the cholera stage of illness, and seemed to be getting well. I remember seeing a group of his workhouse friends clustering outside the window to catch a glimpse of him sitting up in bed breakfasting, and to ask how he did ; and then came his cheery answer, " First-rate," and then a buzz of jubilant young voices exclaiming, " Our Johnnie's getting on rattlin', all afore him ! he's a-polishin' off the loaf like a lord, he is." But the secondary fever carried him off, notwithstanding Marianne's tender, assiduous care. Before his brain finally clouded over, he asked to be read to. Part of Revelation xxi. was selected, and he listened, and then asked simply and calmly : " Do you think the Lord is going to take *me* to the New Jerusalem ?" In his delirium, he called pitiously for his mother ; he died the fifth day, and was buried the following afternoon, — kind Mr. Lomax following the coffin, which was strewn with white roses.

Two brothers of six- and eight-and-twenty were brought in together, and lay for three days very ill

of acute cholera. Levi and Jabez Bland were tall, stalwart young men, civilized in manner, and apparently accustomed to all the comforts of life. But an extraordinary gloom hung over both, and especially over poor Levi, who was by far the more intelligent and interesting of the two. We knew nothing of their antecedents, but could not help gleaning from the talk amongst the women, that their circumstances at home had been deplorable. Their mother had some months before destroyed herself, owing to domestic broils, and the sons had taken her part and quarreled with their father. This accounted for the pair maintaining a resolute and defiant silence when old Mr. Bland came to inquire after them the third day. It was one of those miserable revelations which make one wonder how the discordant elements of society hold together at all. The old gentleman came clad in deep mourning; he stayed half an hour, and held forth to us and to his half-unconscious and wholly unresponsive sons, in a style which made Grace and me surmise he was not unaccustomed to public speaking. He talked glibly of the duty of submission, of afflictions being blessings in disguise, and so forth; but his truisms were "too picked, too spruce, too affected, as it were," to find favor in our eyes. Of course we showed all respect to his gray hairs, and made him free to come and go when he would, but he never appeared again. A visitor far more welcome to the patients came two or three days later, a

modest, respectably dressed young woman, Levi's *fiancée*. Levi was in a critical state then; the acute symptoms had passed away, but left him pulseless and prostrated, and the liquid food and stimulant he took at stated and frequent periods, by the physician's direction, told no more upon him than if they had been so much cold water. He still "had his knowledge," as the women phrased it, unlike his brother, whose wits (never bright, probably) were altogether suffused now. "Jabez, Jabez," poor Levi used to exclaim, "speak to me, lad!" and Jabez would answer in an aggrieved voice, "I'm not here; I'm with my uncle Sam, at Appleby;" and so the brothers at times confused and distressed one another, and we would fain have kept them apart, but had not space to do so. A shed was in progress adjoining the farmhouse, for the better accommodation of the sick, but it could not possibly be completed for some days.

Levi looked calmed and comforted by the visit of his betrothed; she had glided away, poor thing, with her veil down, looking so sad and drooping that it seemed kinder not to intrude spoken sympathy upon her. He saw me, book in hand, sitting by his bed, and made a sign expressive of his wish to be read to. It was the Prodigal Son, and I read it in a low voice without note or comment, feeling more deeply than ever the unearthly beauty of every word. Levi lay quite still, listening.

It had been a trying day. A middle-aged

woman, a slave to dissipation, had been brought in, thirty-six hours before, in an indescribably neglected state. There were four children lying dead in the house she was brought from, their father having refused to let them be moved. For lack of room below, we placed her in a spare bed, curtained off from the convalescent ward. Here we took turns to watch by her, and administered champagne and other restoratives; but all was vain, and she had gone out like a candle that afternoon. Not a few such objects came to the hospital. It would be giving a one-sided view of cholera in the streets and lanes of the city, quite to ignore them.

“The course of passion, and the fret
Of godless hope and fear,”

combined with disease, laid many low; but the theme is too painful to be dwelt upon, and this one instance shall suffice. The repulsive effects of self-indulgence, even on the outward form, were stamped with terrible distinctness on this patient — so much so, that when the time came for moving her body down-stairs, a panic seized on the paupers appointed to do it. Not one would touch her, and the most imperative orders and threats of reporting them to Mr. Lomax failed to restore their nerve. It was not till I buckled to the task myself, with my utmost strength, that they could be induced to lend a hand in bearing the poor remains down-stairs.

This duty accomplished, and a shower of diluted

carbolic acid having been poured on floor and staircase, I looked in on Grace, who was watching by the brothers. Jabez looked drowsy and comfortable, but Levi's eyes were dilated and restless, and his symptoms were not satisfactory. It wanted but half an hour of Grace's resting time, so I strolled out into the green field to make the most of the interval. The evening breeze was rough, but deliciously pure ; it blew straight from those low, slate-colored hills that cut so sharply against the orange sky. It moaned round the corners of the house, and made wild music in the boughs of the elm near our gate. It shook the withered leaves from their parent stem, and bore them on its wings far out of sight ; and I watched flight after flight hurrying by, and likened them in my thoughts to the throng of souls that had passed, and were passing away, day by day, from this little hospital. " We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away."

Anne's cheery voice, close at hand, broke through these twilight musings ; after a quiet talk with her, I returned to the ward. Then followed the reading of the " Prodigal Son " to Levi, and of the " Evening Psalms " to another, and then a fragment of the dear " Promessi Sposi," the solace of many a watching hour. All was quiet — quieter than usual ; the women engaged in preparing their supper and that of the convalescents — all but Nurse Nanny, who sat apart, counting up those everlasting pawn-tickets of hers, that lived in

a tin snuff-box, and were produced and made the groundwork of abstruse calculations evening after evening. Our staff were on their best behavior just now, for we had had a regular pitched battle the previous *Sunday* night, alas! — some of them having chosen that season for a drunken orgie of the most disgraceful kind. Mr. Lomax had supported us gallantly, and turned away the ring-leaders; and since that, abject submission had been the order of the day. Well, nine had struck, and the outer gate been locked; and our doctor had come and gone, after prescribing some fever medicine for Levi. Suddenly, a shout from Levi made me start, and he sprang out of bed, and ran barefooted by me into the tiled kitchen; there, with the strength of delirium, he began battering the house-door, and threatening to demolish it and us if we meddled with him; he wanted to “get away,” to get into the open; “he was on fire, and must be put out!” I imagine his blind aim was to escape into the field, and down the bank, and plunge for coolness into the stream below — that stream which had so lately closed over his mother’s head. Happily, his own violence speedily exhausted him, and after staring about him for some minutes, and smashing some of the kitchen furniture, he let us lead him back to bed.

Tired Grace had slept through this *charivari*, and I had not the heart to wake her, so took upon myself to dispatch a messenger to Mr. Lomax, requesting the loan of a strong man as

soon as possible. The Union was almost a mile off, and several glittering gin-palaces lay on the way to try the fidelity of the messenger ; happily she proved trustworthy, and in an hour a muscular, intelligent, not ill-looking pauper, named Bromwich, returned with her, and was put in charge of Levi and Jabez. Levi had swallowed his fever-draught in silence, and seemed calmer ; Jabez's loud, regular snoring relieved us of all present anxiety on his account.

But the perturbations of that night were not over ; it might be about two o'clock that a sound like a bugle-call woke me suddenly. On reaching the scene of action, I found Levi standing erect on his bed, with some extemporized missile in his hand ready to fling, and a volley of frightful oaths issuing from his lips. Grace stood by, watching him with soft, pitying eyes, which might disarm frenzy if anything could. The women were gathered in the doorway, with candles in their hands, uplifting their voices in a shrill gabble of expostulation ; the patient was now obviously beyond all feminine control, and Bromwich nowhere to be seen ! His nerves, shattered by habitual excess, had failed him, and he had made himself scarce at the first alarm. To dispatch our messenger a second time to the workhouse, asking for further help, was the only course we could take, for we were quite out of the beat of the police. We did this, then silenced the women, and put out the lights, hoping that quiet and darkness might have

a sedative effect. Grace and I sat together on a vacant bed, watching by the faint glimmer from the stove, and wishing for the day. This paroxysm ended by his throwing himself full length on the bed, muttering and threatening ; but a stronger one followed ere long. It was reaching a formidable height when we heard the welcome sound of feet outside. The sky was crimsoning over with the flush that precedes sunrise, when two men appeared ; Bromwich joined them in the kitchen, the sight of allies apparently “screwing his courage to the sticking place,” and the trio advancing together, took poor Levi by surprise. In three minutes he was captured. It went to our hearts to see this fine young man caught in the toils like a wild beast, but there was no help for it. He never tasted food again, though we kept his lips moistened, and in about sixteen hours he sank. Mr. Helps watched by him and Jabez the whole of that day : the one was taken, the other left ; for Jabez, after many ups and downs, got well, and went home. He found a young step-mother already installed, so his stay there was short, and he has ever since lodged with a motherly old widow, who is very kind to him.

From this date, Mr. Lomax decided to have an able-bodied pauper on the premises day and night. Our first “squire of dames” was a man six feet two in height, and broad in proportion. Roach, commonly known as Cock-Roach, had been valet to a duke, and was supposed to have learned good

manners in the ducal atmosphere, but the refinement was only skin deep. He drank so inveterately, and when "red-hot with drinking" grew so ruffianly, as to be rather a terror than a protection in the long November nights ; so we got rid of him within a week. He was, happily, replaced by a civil, honest, handy little old man, who did good service to the end.

I could tell you about little Billy and Nelly, and Nat, and Nat's clean, honest mother, all of whose lives trembled in the balance for a while, but who all got well, and are doing well, thank God ! at this moment ; but my time, and peradventure your patience, might fail. Apropos of patience, do you remember that pretty episode in the "Pilgrim's Progress," of Passion and Patience ? How the former raved and stormed, and the latter was willing to wait. You may see it illustrated in this ward of the hospital. Little Terry McGrath is about four, the pet at home, used to his mother's knee ; but his mother cannot nurse him now, for her doom has gone forth, and she lies meekly awaiting it. So Terry is in my lap, rocked to and fro, and seemingly easy in his nest of blankets ; but his sweet baby face alters from minute to minute, the life and beauty passing out of it, till at last its hue recalls Raphael's demoniac boy in the Vatican. Then the breathing ceases. The mother's eye marks all ; she beckons me to bring him to her, and kisses his lips, saying dreamily, "My little son, to-night thou'lt be in Paradise."

Now, Terence the elder comes in with the priest. Terence is a tall, emaciated figure, with a beautiful face of the Spanish type, black curly hair touched with gray, and dark eyes, bright as diamonds. How holy and trustful he looks, as he kneels erect with clasped hands between his wife and dead child ! He knows that he shall soon be with them. Mr. O'Halloran recites in English a prayer from some old Liturgy, quoted almost word for word in our Bishop Andrewes' "Devotions ;" we may all join in that, for it was writtten for our comfort long before mediæval corruption crept in. Then Terence hangs over his child-wife, and they talk together in broken accents ; we would fain leave them to themselves, but cannot, for Mary cries out if the friction is suspended for a moment. Terence says, at last, "he must go home and put the childer to bed ; with the Blessed Lord's leave he will be here again betimes in the morning."

We arm him with provisions for his little ones and himself, — much needed, for our doctor assigns their diet of "herrings and river water" as the cause of their virulent type of illness ; then Terence wrings our hands with that wonderful look of mingled anguish and hope only to be seen in some Italian *Ecce Homo* ; he ventures a glance towards his wife, as she lies there folded in a scarlet flannel cape, then slowly and resolutely walks away. "'Tain't worth that there man's while to leave this here place :" this was Nanny's

true prophecy, as with arms akimbo she watched him pass out.

That night, Mary went, we gladly believe, to rejoin her little son in Paradise. Our next news of Terence came from the priest, — not the one I mentioned before, kind, earnest Mr. O'Halloran, but his superior, though junior, Monsieur La Fleur. He was a Frenchman, and an original. He is said to have possessed a wonderful talent for teaching, and to have made quite a reputation for the college near Norminster, over which he presided ; but you never could have guessed anything of this from his looks or manner. He had a round, pink and white, merry young face, with the blithest laugh, and most “nimble spirit of mirth,” and an inexhaustible flow of droll sayings, to which the pretty French idiom lent a grace. He often accompanied Mr. O'Halloran, on whom mainly devolved the duty of visiting our Roman Catholic patients, and lingered outside the wards for a conversation with one or other of us, while his colleague was at work within. I do believe he took a kindly interest in our welfare, and did the little he could to amuse and distract our thoughts. On this occasion, however, he had come straight from the cemetery, having performed the last offices for Mary McGrath and her boy. We drew from him that Terence was there, looking ill — “*très mal ! très mal !*” He had lighted up with pleasure at the sight of the crown of white roses on the coffin, but he was pale as an egg, poor

child ; and then he *would* kneel down in the wet and mud by the grave, and it was so bad for him, besides spoiling the knees of his trousers, which were of good broadcloth ! This last statement was made in all seriousness ; and then the light-hearted Frenchman ran on to other topics, acting on his favorite maxim, *À quoi bon s'attrister ?* (What is the use of making one's self sad ?) " For me," he added, in his curiously accented English, of which he was not a little proud, " I am of a lively disposition, like the most of my nation ; I have no vocation for La Trappe — absolutely none, mesdames ! " He laughed and rubbed his hands, when one of us suggested, in the spirit of mischief, that perhaps the severe discipline of the monks of La Trappe might most benefit those who least affected it. " Ah, ah, my *shilde*, you are malicious ! " he exclaimed ; " but we shall see you one of ourselves shortly ! Ah, I foresee it ! Meanwhile, *bon soir*, mesdames, for here comes my excellent brother." Then he and Mr. O'Halloran walked away together, the very impersonation of *Allegro* and *Penseroso*.

Why does memory dwell on trivialities like these ? Simply because " The last of everything is affecting," and that was, to the best of my recollection, the last time we ever saw M. La Fleur. He sickened of cholera a few days later, was devotedly nursed by some of his flock, and rallied sufficiently to be sent back to his sunny home and his old mother in Normandy. But atrophy

had set in, and he did not live through the winter. The double funeral had taken place on a Saturday. There was a lull on Sunday — no fatal case ; and the church bells, flinging their music far and wide, lightened even our hearts, unwilling exiles as we were from our holy and beautiful house of prayer. Mr. Helps came early to administer the Holy Communion to us three, in one of the wards ; we had covered the table with a “ fair linen cloth ” from home, and decked it with bright, sweet roses, to relieve the gloom of the place ; and now, in the strength of that heavenly Food, we prepared to meet whatever it might please God to send of sadness and struggle. Early the next morning Terence was brought in : his coming created quite a sensation in that little world. He was laid in a passage room, where we had had two extra beds put up, for times of pressure. Later in the day, the second bed received a tenant, too ; Brancker, an artisan of about forty, of powerful frame — struck down, alas ! in the middle of a “ drinking-bout,” wherein he had tried to drown his terror of infection. Here were “ Patience and Passion ” side by side, Terence bearing his twelve hours’ martyrdom without a murmur, repressing all sound of suffering while the cold drops stood on his brow, and his cramped, knotted limbs almost defied our best efforts at friction. Hour after hour passed, remedies and warmth unavailing, gentle rubbing the only resource. As the strength wore out, the fortitude increased, if possi-

ble ; there was scarcely power for utterance in that close conflict, but one brief sentence, " I'm holding by the Cross," gave the key-note of Terence's thoughts.

Brancker's was a dreary nursing ; no self-control, no recognition (to the eye of man, at least) of God's hand ; no response to Mr. Helps's ministrations, and earnest, loving appeals. His own brother, a rude but kindly attendant, fled at last, dismayed by the " shuddering start of passion in her might," and so he sank. Terence seemed all the while wholly unconscious of the tragedy enacting within an arm's length of him. In this and other instances, we were much impressed by the state of isolation in which the spirit of each cholera patient appears to dwell. Whether selfish or unselfish by nature, the individual's whole powers seem engrossed by the effort of bearing his own burden. *Je mourrai seul* (we all must die alone), a true saying always, is emphatically true often from the moment of seizure, in this most mysterious of diseases.

One proof more of a loving, grateful heart Terence, however, gave. I had bidden him point out the limb in which friction was most helpful, as the cramps were apt to shift suddenly from one part of the body to another. For a considerable time he made no sign, and I sorrowfully remarked to Marianne Barnard, who had just come in, that the rubbing seemed to have lost its virtue. Terence beckoned me nearer, and said, softly, " Lady

dear, the rubbing is all the comfort in this world to me, but it's tired out you are, and I see it." Marianne, now liberated from a hopeless watch in the next ward, left Terence no more. She closed his eyes in peace, just as the Norminster curfew began to toll. He passed away so quietly!

"Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary, worn-out winds expire so soft."

We were then at the culminating point of our mortality, and can recall the chill feeling at one's heart, when told that the postman had flung a letter directed to one of us at the hospital over the wall, and fled, lest he should come in contact with its owner. It gave us some faint idea, for the moment, of the isolation of lepers, as described in the Gospels. Of course, this general avoidance made any visit of sympathy doubly precious. One afternoon, about this time, I was concocting some "Liebig" for a patient, when Nanny bustled in with the information that an "ould gentleman were axing perticklar for Miss Dutton, but would rayther not come in." Outside our kitchen door I recognized gray-haired Lord Kendal, standing alone, with a slight nervous trepidation in his manner; but the gentle, benevolent expression of his face more marked than ever. For obvious reasons it seemed right to stand aloof from him, and so, for a minute or two, we respected my self-imposed *cordon sanitaire* (guard against contagion); then the warm, unworldly heart within

him got the better of prudence, and hurrying forward he grasped both my hands, asking with deep interest after our welfare, and that of each patient. He added kind offers of help, and seeing one of poor Mary Howard's little ones running about in the kitchen, promised a provision for it in one of the charitable institutions which his beneficence helped to maintain.

It is time this recital of cholera experiences should cease, lest you should be experimentally reminded of Ruskin's remark that "Monotony is pain." I will close with the singular history of Isobel Cairns, premising, as children say, that it ends well. It was the sixth week of our nursing, and the shed which I have told you the guardians built for our patients had just been completed. It was a solid, yet airy and cheerful place ; a thick curtain divided off the men's ward from that of the women and children. Kind friends had prepared for us a series of very effectively illuminated texts to adorn our cornice the whole way round, and two of the cross-beams of the roof were decorated in like manner. Everything here was clean, and might be kept so with ease. What a contrast to the low, gloomy, inconvenient rooms of the old farm, with their mournful associations — I had almost said superstitions ! For the people about us were intensely superstitious — some of them religiously believed (it was their only religion, I fear) that the place was haunted ; they were full of signs and omens, winding-sheets in the candles,

itchings in their elbows, which always betokened a death, and then what they talked of as the "death-call" among themselves in whispers ! I firmly believe this last sound proceeded from our neighbors, the white owls in the chantry, but such a suggestion would have been scouted by our women. Once, indeed, we had been able to dispel an alarm of this sort triumphantly, but only once. One of the convalescents, chancing to stray into a ward where several sick folk lay, indiscreetly exclaimed that he heard the death-watch. "He heard it his own self, that very moment ; it was all up with somebody !" This prophetic announcement might have wrought its own completion, if one of us had not happily divined its cause. "Whereabouts is your death-watch, Willy ?" asked Grace ; "show me." Willy pointed to a little shelf against the wall, on which stood a large jug of flowers : "It 's up theere, Miss Oakley ; I hear it a-ticking now — don't you ?" Grace replied by smilingly removing the flowers, and displaying a small brass clock which the Rector of St. Magnus had kindly brought us as a loan, that afternoon.

It was essential for us nurses to put a bold front on matters in general, as the slightest faltering would have "demoralized" this motley crew ; but I must plead guilty to some very weird, uncanny sensations at times, some "faint cold chills about my heart" in the pauses of my work, causeless dreads and shudderings, moments when ex-

cited fancy seemed to push reason aside. There is a weir in the stream a little below our field, over which in certain states of the tide the waters flow with a hoarse murmur. That murmuring, heard in "the witching time of night," used to blend solemnly with the sadder sounds within our wards, as though "remorse and woe" had lent their voices to the unconscious stream. Even now the two remain inseparably connected in my mind, and memory lends a dirge-like undertone to the playful chime of those falling waters.

CHAPTER V.

ISOBEL CAIRNS.

OUR migration into the shed seemed to strike at the root of these morbid fancies, though some of our fatal and most abject "cases" were brought there. Isobel Cairns was carried in early one Sunday morning ; we had no previous notice of her arrival, and the first intimation I received was a quick call for help from Grace, as I was reading the day's Psalms to Jabez Bland. There were the men with measured tramp bearing the stretcher the whole length of the shed ; it was deposited alongside of the bed that was always kept in readiness for such surprises. A muster of "hot bottles," india-rubber or stone, was made ; and meanwhile a young person of attractive and superior appearance, seemingly as ill as it is possible to be, was lifted out and deposited in the bed. The cramps were dreadful, and kept two of us at work, with short pauses, for many hours. Poor Isobel ! if pain may be compared with pain, hers surely bore away the palm. There was some mystery hanging over her, evidently. The Inspector had been casually told of her state by a kind-hearted old laborer, and had found her alone,

occupying a good room in a house of some pretension. It seems a panic had seized her hostess, for there she lay untended, with a baby ten day's old at her side. Of course, the neglect, the recent birth of the child, the young mother's agony of mind, all these things made her state more than critical — hopeless to human eye. At first she seemed bewildered, and stared wildly round. Presently, however, she grew quieter, looked at Grace, then at me, earnestly, and cried out, "Save me! save me! for the sake of the puir wee thing that has nane but me!" This piercing call startled us, and Grace glanced at me across the bed, with an all but imperceptible shake of the head. The truth was clear; that cramped, distorted left hand wore no wedding ring; the story of the unhappy girl was one of sin and ruin.

It was hard to believe this; so modest, and neat, and refined did she and her surroundings appear; so plaintive and sweet was her Scotch accent, as she moaned, "My puir bairn! my puir bairn!" continually. Our anxiety to save her redoubled, if possible; and, after ten days of the closest nursing, we had the inexpressible comfort of hearing her pronounced out of danger.

With the free leave of our kind doctor, a dear friend of mine, a Norminster physician in great practice, watched over this and several other cases. Till within a fortnight of our breaking up, he was the only practitioner admitted within our walls. His untiring kindness to the sick and to

us, his almost daily visits at a great sacrifice of valuable time, "all for love and nothing for reward," we can never think of without a thrill of gratitude. The following remarks, extracted from Dr. M——'s notes (afterwards printed), show how extreme had been poor Isobel's danger:—
"Violent cramps, etc.; thirst and restlessness excessive; she several times appeared to be dying; blueness and clamminess of the skin, sunken eyes, and great exhaustion; she was for some time picking at the bedclothes. Chlorine administered regularly from Sunday till Wednesday, when Mr. —— recommended the doses should be given at longer intervals; flushings and excitement, but no after fever. Recovered."

Isobel was a "heavy handful" to nurse, it must be owned, so incessant and imperious in her requirements. "O rub! rub! rub my pair feet, the tain and the tither! O rub, and dinna cease! O, pit some mair ice in my mouth—a wee bittie, Miss Dutton, a wee bittie!" This was her cry, day and night, compelling us now and then to administer a rebuke, even while humoring her wishes. But, as the mother is supposed to feel a peculiar tenderness for the most fractious of her babes, so we cherished our poor forlorn Isobel with a special love, and she was not at heart ungrateful. The old workman whose timely intervention had probably saved her life used to call in most evenings to inquire after her, and it was pretty to see her joyful welcome of him when con-

sciousness returned. Another visitor also came, the woman of the house where Isobel had lodged ; from her she shrank with fear and aversion so marked, that we forbade the visit being repeated till Isobel's strength should return. The woman's account of her lodger was as follows :— Isobel came from the Highlands, and had left home and her widowed mother to seek, as so many do, service in England. She had lived some years with a well-known and respected family, whom we will call Malcolm, about thirty miles from Norminster, and had proved herself so clever and trustworthy a servant that, young as she was, Mrs. Malcolm had promoted her to be cook. This woman had been her fellow-servant for a time, but had since married a Norminster man ; so she and Isobel had lost sight of one another till a few weeks before, when Isobel had written to her, engaging her spare room for a month. Shortly after, the unhappy young woman had arrived in a state bordering on distraction. Her betrayer had proved heartless, and extinguished any hope that might have lingered in her breast of his offering her the poor reparation of marriage. Her mother, a widow of unstained character, would die of grief in her Highland home, if the tidings of her child's shame were brought to her. All was misery within and without. Nevertheless, the child was safely born, and the young mother seemed to be doing well, when Asiatic cholera in its most virulent type attacked her. The rest of her history we knew.

"Where was the child?" we asked. "It had been removed," the woman said. Another of Mrs. Malcolm's servants, also a Highland lassie, from the same "toon" as Isobel, and her bosom friend, had come over on hearing of Isobel's removal to our hospital, and taken the babe away. Effie Polwarth had announced her intention of shortly returning to visit Isobel, the journey by train from Malcolm Grange to Norminster being a short and direct one. Our informant on this painful subject was a vulgar-minded, selfish woman. She coolly observed that but for this unlucky "collery," Isobel might have gone back to her situation and been never the worse! Mrs. Malcolm fully believed Isobel to be with her mother at Inverness, and would never have asked any questions, or, if she had, would be "easy put off." The woman enlarged on her own kindness to Isobel, the poor chance of repayment in full for her trouble, and the consequences to Isobel should her sad secret get abroad, in a hard, sneering tone, that redoubled our pity for the hapless girl thus thrown on her mercy; and many were the anxious colloquies Grace and I held concerning her. We were glad when she was so far recovered as to be able to attend to Mr. Helps's ministrations, and to our morning and evening family prayers.

The Sunday fortnight of her admittance was a thankful and joyful day to me, for I had been able, for the first time since our hospital opened, to attend divine service in a quiet, thinly attended

neighboring church. Meanwhile Grace took charge of the shed. On my return from Evensong, I found two neat young women asking for admission. The taller of them, a strikingly handsome and intelligent-looking girl, introduced herself as Euphemia Polwarth, in the service of Mrs. Malcolm of the Grange, and requested leave for herself and her companion to visit their fellow-servant, Isobel Cairns. There seemed no longer any objection on the score of health to their doing so ; the *mauvais moment* of the first interview must be got over. Perhaps the patient's intense restlessness and irritability of nerves might be soothed by their presence ; so I ushered them in with an earnest caution against over-exciting her in her utter weakness. " And remember," I added, " God has mercifully brought her back from the gates of the grave, that she may truly repent and return to Him ; act as true Christian friends to poor Isobel ; do not, do not advise her to take any step that would be displeasing to Him, I beg of you."

Euphemia's splendid dark eyes shunned mine while I spoke, and her face crimsoned ; its expression grew positively repulsive at that moment. Pointing them to Isobel's bed, I joined Grace, and we remained a little apart, but could hear the sound of weeping, and see the sick girl's arms clasped round her friend's neck and the stately Effie hiding her face on Isobel's pillow. A whispered conference ensued, the purport of which we only learnt from its very annoying and disappoint-

ing results. The visitors partook of some tea we ordered for them, then departed to catch their train, Effie thanking us in her Scotch accent and reserved, proud way for our hospitality.

Isobel was so exhausted that sedatives and rest were immediately needful.

I hasten over the next week, during which her mood seemed never the same for an hour together, waking aye and weary, every phase of gloom and ungraciousness passed through by turns. Yet one could see she hated herself for it all the while. "Who can minister to a mind diseased?" we sighed to one another and to wise, persevering Mr. Helps. Her reserve continued unbroken, like a lava crust with a boiling stream flowing beneath. The wonder was that, in spite of all this mental turmoil, Isobel was getting well fast.

At this time, imperative family reasons suddenly called Grace away from hospital work. It was like parting with a very dear young sister, for nothing cements love so fast as work of this kind done jointly. She, Marianne, and I had insensibly slipped into a habit of calling one another "sister," which clings to us still. We had been busy together, and sad and anxious together, and, more often than you would suppose, merry together; and what should part us now?

An influential newspaper reached us one day, with a marked paragraph commenting in the most friendly spirit on our small doings; it closed by asserting that we three "represented the three

leading schools of thought in our Church." We could not but smile at the contrast between this rather grandiloquent definition of our sentiments, and the very humble nature of the employments it found us engaged in ; one boiling bread and milk to suit the fastidious taste of Jabez Bland, another splitting up a huge lump of ice with a darning-needle, the third stuffing a bed with fresh chaff for poor Isobel. Truly it is a great and blessed thought that Geoge Herbert has bequeathed to us :—

" Who sweeps a room as for thy sake,
Makes that, and the action, fine."

Only let us try to work heartily together for his sake, and then variety of thought and feeling on minor matters will rather enhance, than detract from the sweetness of communion with one another.

Grace was gone, but a loving Providence so ordered it that Marianne was set free, within a day or two, to return to the hospital. Not many patients remained there now, and they were doing well ; a sickly woman out of Abbot's Street, brought in under Mr. Helps's eye, had been our last arrival.

I think it was on the Sunday after Grace's departure that Euphemia reappeared on the scene, accompanied by Isobel's landlady. There was an eager, stormy, whispered consultation between the three, Isobel sitting up in bed and looking with distressed eyes from the one to the other

of her evil counselors. Their tones and looks through the colloquy were so unsatisfactory, so unsuited to the day of rest and prayer and praise, that I could not let them pass unnoticed. I spoke a few words in a low voice to the group, urging upon each the duty of truth in their present dealings, upon Isobel the duty of hiding nothing from God and from her kind and too confiding mistress. God would help her to do this, if she asked Him honestly; if not, however successful the deceit, she would pierce herself through eventually with many sorrows. At this, Effie threw back her head, and her eyes flashed defiance at me, though not a sound escaped her white lips. I wondered at the vehemence of her feeling, not knowing at the time the full depth and audacity of the plan concocted by her in order to screen her friend. Hers was the master spirit of the two, and, seeing Isobel crushed by her guilt and shame, she had originally negotiated for her with her Norminster landlady, and helped generously to pay the expenses of her stay here. When cholera seized upon Isobel, Effie had put a bold face on the matter, and led their unsuspecting mistress to believe that it had attacked the girl at Edinburgh on her way home. This delusion she had kept up; and Mrs. Malcolm, really liking and valuing Isobel much, had readily consented to keep the place open for her. The weak point in this plot was its being known by Isobel's grasping landlady; but Effie hoped to keep her

lips closed with a silver, perchance a golden padlock. In her zeal for her friend, she forgot the true saying, that "A lie has no legs." Effie went away with a sullen brow, more touched and pricked at heart, I could not help thinking, than that indomitable pride of hers would let her own. Again poor Isobel needed sedatives and rest, and to be left to her reflections.

I had my thoughts, too, for it was quite clear that Mrs. Malcolm must not be allowed to remain thus blindfolded by her own dependents; sooner than that, I would write; yet the task of informer was an odious one, and I could not bring myself to wave this threat over Isobel's head, thus robbing any confession she might make of its only merit, spontaneousness. To wait a few days, and commit all to God, seemed the best way.

And, happily, God did work in the matter, speaking Himself to Isobel, not in storm, nor in earthquake, but in his own still, small voice. That reached her conscience when nothing else could. The fidgety ways gradually passed away, giving place to deep sadness. She shyly asked me one day to lend her a Bible, and after that I often saw her reading — one might hope from the intentness of her look, *searching* — the Scriptures: then followed a gracious rain of frequent tears, freshening and cooling brain and heart as nothing else can. "Miss Amy, dear," she said one evening, glancing up with unwonted softness, "can ye spare me a minute, just?" I sat down by her bed. "Miss

Amy, will ye write in the name of me to Mistress Malcolm, and tell her all the truth ? I canna justly guide the pen mysel', and it's a sair burden I maun lay on her heart, puir leddy. But tell all, Miss Amy, tell all ; for I canna draw near my heavenly Father with a lee in my mouth, and I'll breathe freer when I've laid my sin and my shame at his feet ! ”

Then, with many breaks and bitter sighs, Isobel poured forth her history. Her mind reverted to early days, to her mother, to her father now dead ; to her home, and the rigid yet loving training those Presbyterian parents had given her. Her words brought Burn's “wee bit ingle,” “clean hearthstane,” and “thriftie wifie,” before my eyes. Then came the going forth into service, and the “braw hoose,” and its many temptations and distractions. “Ah !” she said, wringing her hands, “so lang as I luved and keepit my Sabbaths, all went weel wi' me ; but the warld creepit in, and the Sabbath became a weariness, and I hearkened, fule bairn that I was, to ane that mocked at holy things ; and sae he has lured me over the pit's brink, and left me to perish.” The dark tale of her fall and desertion followed in incoherent words, and then the cry, “Tell all, Miss Amy, all but my doole and wae ; ye canna tell the hundredth part of that ! And spare Effie ; she's a kind lass, is Effie, and never blistered her tongue with a lee till she did it to save me : and Effie has a mither to wark for, too.”

On the whole, the tone of Isobel's confession was hopeful. It showed no love for vice, no habitual light-mindedness, no desire to shift blame from herself to others. The base destroyer of her peace had found her no easy prey, for love of dress and personal vanity were not her weak points ; and it was only by having recourse to the most cruel and unmanly arts that he had got her into his power.

This view of the matter, which Mrs. Malcolm afterwards confirmed, makes poor Isobel's story specially instructive, I think. She sinned and she suffered simply from neglecting to watch and pray. By little and little she had allowed the sacred truths, learnt in her Highland home, to slip out of mind ; her conscience, tender at first even to over-scrupulousness, from its training under Covenanting influences, had become dull through willful contact with evil ; scoffs and light talk, which once would have shocked her sense of right, failed to do so, and so she fell, poor girl, — fell away from the guide of her youth, and forgot the covenant of her God.

The letter to Mrs. Malcolm was written at Isobel's dictation, — a very humble, sorrowful, self-reproaching letter. Seldom has so painful an office fallen to me ; and the day but one after, when the reply was brought in, I doubt whether Isobel's heart went pitapat faster than mine. It must have been a terrible pang to her to listen to that reply. Mrs. Malcolm wrote so gently, griev-

ing far more for the sin and deceit practiced by her servants than for the exceeding inconvenience and distress entailed by them on herself. Indeed, she seemed lost in amazement and grief at the dark story. It was obvious, she said, that neither Isobel nor the fellow-servants who had abetted her falsehood could remain in her service: she had been compelled to give them warning, but would deal with them as leniently as was possible. She trusted that Isobel would repent, and pray to be forgiven; if *her* forgiveness could be any comfort to the poor, unhappy girl, it was freely accorded.

Isobel seemed crushed to the dust by this letter, and, in addition to her own sorrows, Effie's loss of an excellent situation was a heavy grief to her. However, she was now in the way to find peace, and her "bosom being cleansed from the perilous stuff" which had choked its better feelings so long, she seemed to recover something of the spring and elasticity of youth. It was a glad day with us when first she rose from her bed, and, supported by two of us, tottered half the length of the ward and back again. She soon "found her feet," as nurses say, and might be seen doing little kindly offices for the other patients; it cheered her to be employed in light culinary work at the stove in our shed, and she took special pride in preparing our nightly supper of "hale-some parritch, chief of Scotia's food." Capital porridge it was, too! but this by the way. Iso-

bel's dearest employment was reading. A dimness which had threatened her sight at first soon dispersed, and she then threw herself on our store of books, devotional and miscellaneous, with untiring ardor. From Dr. Vaughan's "Commentary on the Revelation," which she could scarcely lay down, to Marryat's pleasant "Masterman Ready," nothing came amiss to Isobel; but the Book of books still held the first place in her thoughts, and she used to look out the marginal references with a conscientious care few Englishwomen of her class would have practiced.

November was come, and almost gone. The rain pattered against our windows, and several hailstorms had rattled on our long wooden roof with astounding din. The wonderful meteors of that special year had played overhead on the 12th of November, one of our number counting more than a thousand of those brilliant fire-balls. Isobel was still with us, and remained in the hospital until the joyful day of our return home.

It took us by surprise at last; our Union doctor pronounced the three or four remaining convalescents quite fit to be moved; Isobel we placed in a lodging in Abbot's Street, under the wing of a motherly woman; the rest went back to their families. We only waited to surrender the keys to Mr. Lomax, and then, with rapturously thankful hearts, returned to ours. The halcyon calm of that first unbroken night's rest, it would be difficult to describe!

It was a great relief to Isobel to hear from Effie about this time of her intended marriage to a respectable tradesman. The same letter, however, brought a mournful account of Isobel's poor baby ; it had had a fall, through the neglect of its nurse, and its spine was injured. Her grief and solicitude on its account were deep. She at once went off to see it, though very unfit for the exertion, and she brought the poor, miserable little object back with her, and tended it unremittingly till the time came when she had to go to service. Its death was quite a blow to her, and she bewailed to me, with bitter tears, the "doom" her sin had brought on the "wee bit thing that hadn't sinned, like her." We liked her all the better for this warm feeling. We were pleased, too, with her strict honesty in repaying some money we advanced to her for its funeral expenses. We have never had reason to doubt for a moment that Isobel is bringing forth "fruits meet for repentance."

A train of circumstances not worth recounting here, led to Isobel's speedy return to her native Scotland. She has now lived about four years in a respectable family north of Tweed. She writes from time to time, and one of her letters lies before me now: "Isobel takes the liberty of troubling Miss Dutton with another of her ill-written letters, to say that she is well, and hopes her dear ladies are so, too." Here the pronoun abruptly changes. "I bless the day when I was carried to the hospital. I was blinded with sin then, but

now, thanks to God for his great goodness, I see." Then follows a string of affectionate messages to all who had befriended her.

Her last letter, dated January, 1871, is written, after a much longer interval than usual, from a warm nook in the South of England. With the bold disregard of pronouns that characterizes her style, she begins: "Isobel writes to you, but is ashamed to do it after being so long—but, indeed, I am not ungrateful, and my dear friends in Norminster are always in my daily prayers." She then relates how her "dear master" had been taken ill, and they had moved to the south for his health; but he had died, and the shock had told so sadly on his young widow, that for some time she had not been expected to survive. "But, thank God for his goodness, she is better." The strain of the whole letter is most thankworthy, as it respects Isobel's feelings and conduct.

Before our fifteen recovered patients dispersed far and wide to their homes or places of service, we had a solemn, happy gathering in St. Magnus's Church. Our tried friends, the Rector and Curate, officiated at this thanksgiving service, and the former addressed us briefly, in words which, coming straight from the heart, went straight to it. After this, we gave our patients and their friends, to the number of about forty, a substantial tea, in a room bright with flowers, flags, and devices. Our clergymen were there, and our good doctor, and Mr. Lomax, and Dr. M——; and harmony

and chastened gladness possessed all hearts. It seemed a day that, —

“ In golden letters should be set,
Among the high tides in the calendar ”

of thankful memory.

These slight sketches of district work, or attempts at work, with its offshoots of poorhouse and hospital experience, are but a few out of many pictured in my remembrance. They are by no means the most sensational that I have witnessed ; the most sensational scenes are not generally the most edifying, nor the most helpful towards adding to one's stock of experience in such a way as may benefit others. On this head I would venture to say to my young sister workers, If the details of evil are unavoidably brought under your eye, let not your thoughts rest upon them a moment longer than is absolutely needful. Dismiss them with a vigorous effort as soon as you have done your best to apply a remedy ; commit the matter into higher Hands ; then turn to your book, your music, your wood-carving, your pet recreation, whatever it is. This is one way, at least, of keeping the mind elastic and pure.

It is the growing intricacy of district work that I have tried to point out and furnish some clew to. The strands in the thread of social life become more numerous and perplexing year by year, now that many “run to and fro, and knowledge (bad as well as good) is increased,” and thought has waxed bolder (perchance too bold) in its range,

and intellectual pursuits are open to the peasant as well as to the peer. Owing to these and other causes, high and low life are gradually melting into one another; or at least the sharp contrast between them is softening down. New problems to be solved, new entanglements to be unraveled, are continually arising. These will beset even the lowly path of the worker amongst the poor, and she must be prepared to deal with them; she will need both the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove.

Now let us take a parting glance at our work from the lower standpoint of homely Common-sense, Religion's best handmaid.

Experience teaches that the district visitor must have a distinct aim in all she does. "How," says the proverb, "can you ask your road, till you know whither you intend to go?" She must do and say nothing for effect: "Praise be her penance here."

She must be rigidly discreet, adopting from a nobler motive than self-interest the Italian motto, *Orecchie spalancate, e bocca stretta*.

She must not be made of "so slight elements" as to grow weary of her work because there seems little to show for it. "Have patience, and the mulberry-leaf will become satin." "By dint of much coming and going the bird builds her nest."

She must use her best discrimination in read-

ing character, and yet be content to be taken in sometimes — humbled, not soured, by such disappointments : “ Love’s mark outwears the rankest blot.”

She must crop down her own fancies and personal indulgences to the utmost limit compatible with the requirements of her station, in order to minister to the bodies of those whose souls she would fain benefit. “ One doesn’t *give* (in the true sense of the word) at all,” said one of the best and most lady-like women I ever knew, until one *pinches* one’s self to give.”

Lastly, she must beware of ever deeming herself an isolated worker ; that misconception tends to gloom and self-consciousness. The opposite and true view of oneness in our aims with good men and angels, of every degree, is gladdening in the extreme. “ We all belong to the same corps,” was a favorite thought with the author of the “ Christian Year.”

A district visitor of this stamp, rich in these *petites vertus* which are yet so great, distinct in aim, unaffected, discreet, not soon daunted, trustful, tenderly indulgent, wisely open-handed, such a one must be blessed in her deed ; blessed now, more blessed still when her brief hour of work in the Master’s vineyard shall have closed. May each of us, my sisters, be enabled then to say, —

“ My prayers and alms, imperfect and defiled,
Were but the feeble efforts of a child ;

Howe'er performed, it was their brightest part
That they proceeded from a grateful heart.
I cast them at thy feet ; my only plea
Is — what it was — dependence upon thee :
When struggling in the vale of tears below,
That never failed, nor shall it fail me now."

WORK IN THE HOSPITAL.

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CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE OF AGNES E. JONES.

AGNES ELIZABETH JONES was born at Cambridge, England, November 10th, 1832, her father, who was Lieutenant-colonel of the Twelfth Regiment, having been ordered there a few days previously.

On the 12th of August, 1837, her father's regiment sailed from Cork for Mauritius, and the family accompanied it. The bright little child spent six happy years on this beautiful island, and in after years vivid memories would often arise of the birthday excursions to the Pampelmousse gardens, where many beautiful palm-trees and rare tropical plants grew in native luxuriance, and of the pleasant months spent by the sea-side at Mahébourg, where wonderful shells with rosy tints and pearly lining were now and then the prize of the eager searcher. Even at this time, the love of nature was one of her characteristics. On one of those long, happy days at the botanical gardens, her rapture was very great at finding a skeleton leaf,

whose delicate tracery seemed to her eye, with its quick perception of the beautiful, a most marvelous treasure. Long afterwards she would recall the scenery of the island with a distinctness which proved how deep an impression its southern loveliness had left on her memory. And meanwhile, circumstances were moulding her character for the steadfastness of self-consecration which in after life distinguished her. No recollection of those early days comes back to her family so often as her pleasure in accompanying her parents to the Bible-readings at the house of the French pastor, Monsieur Le Brun. Some years afterwards she wrote: "I think my first real concern for my soul was awakened by the closing sentence of young M. Le Brun's sermon, one week-day evening. 'And now, brethren, if you cannot answer me, how will you, at the last day, answer the Great Searcher of hearts?' This sentence haunted me night and day for some time."

The persecutions that had dispersed the missionaries on the adjoining island of Madagascar the year before, sent also many of the native Christians from their homes; some of these found a place of refuge at Mauritius, and it gave the little girl great delight when she was permitted to visit them. It also had a more permanent effect, for it filled her young heart with that active sympathy for the distressed, which bore such blessed fruit in her mature years.

In 1843, the family returned to Great Britain,

where their home was established at Fahan House, a small, but very lonely spot on the bank of Lough Swilly, which is an arm of the Atlantic indenting the north coast of Ireland, in County Donegal, west of the Giant's Causeway. In January, 1848, Agnes was sent, with her sister, to the Miss Ainsworths' school, at Avonbank, Stratford-on-Avon. The change from the extreme severity of governesses' rule to the pleasant, cheerful work of this admirably managed school, was soon felt, and the beneficial effects were seen in the advance made in study. Agnes, especially, needed affectionate and gentle guiding; her mental powers were as yet almost dormant. Kind and judicious discipline, combined with the stimulus of example and the encouragement of merited approbation, soon showed that her former teachers had been mistaken in their judgment of her capacity. She now became remarkable among her companions for steady application and earnest desire for improvement. She was less popular than many others, because her mind was more set on advance in her studies than on amusement, and she required to give time and close attention to learn what some could master rapidly; but then, what she once learned was her own forever, and years afterwards she would be ready with the date of an historical event, or the definition of some abstract term, which they had long ago forgotten.

After two years and three months at school, her

father, whose health had suddenly broken down in the autumn, was called away from earth on the 19th March, 1850. Agnes and her sister were summoned home, but arrived some hours too late. The family had no idea of Agnes's passionate love for her father until they read her papers and journals, in which constant reference is made to him, to what he was to her in life, and what his memory ever continued to be to her.

Her father's death had a marked effect on Agnes, and from that time her character developed more rapidly, especially in its simple, unselfish devotion to others. She seemed to feel herself responsible for their comfort and happiness, and her mother, sister, and brother were the objects of a watchful care that was ever ready to minister to them at any sacrifice of her own ease and pleasure. Childish things were thenceforth laid aside, and a certain maturity of thought and feeling was perceptible. "That summer of 1850," Miss Jones writes, "the dear home at Fahan was left, as it was then believed, forever, and my mother took us to Dublin, where she intended to reside, that we might have the benefit of masters. We attended the ministry of the Rev. John Gregg, now Bishop of Cork, and immediately joined his Confirmation classes. His clear gospel teaching, and earnest personal appeal to the hearts of the young, awoke new desires after God." Her aunt and godmother, who ever watched over her spiritual life with the deepest interest, writes : " Her Confirmation seemed to me

the time of Agnes's real conversion ; she wrote me such a letter, and told me that, on returning to her pew, her sins had all seemed to rise up before her. From that time I truly believe the earnest desire of her heart was to live to God."

"There is an admirable Sunday-school in connection with Trinity Church, at which the children of the higher classes attend as well as the poor ; very soon after our arrival in Dublin, we joined it, and were placed by Mr. Gregg in a class taught by Miss Williams, a Christian of deep experience, and one who possessed the valuable power of imparting knowledge, and of touching the hearts of her pupils." Agnes ever retained a warm affection for her, and corresponded with her as she had opportunity.

Before leaving the North of Ireland, Miss Jones met at Ardmore two ladies, Miss Mason and Miss Bellingham, who were much engaged in missionary work among the Romanists. She at once formed a friendship with those devoted women, which was most valuable to her, and a source of much happiness. As they resided in Dublin, she saw them frequently during the winter, and became deeply interested in their work. Her attachment to Miss Mason ripened into a warm and lasting friendship, which had much influence on her after life ; to her she often wrote for advice when in perplexity and depression, and through her she was introduced to some of her most valuable friends.

In the spring of 1851, the mother and sisters went abroad for some months, and on their return in the autumn, the sister was sent to school at Brighton, while Agnes and her mother took up their abode in Dublin.

From her journal, kept during this winter with tolerable regularity, one would fancy her to have been leading an idle, useless life, so frequently do charges of indolence and negligence occur ; those who were with her at the time, however, tell a different story. She was studying most carefully Bacon's "Essays" and Butler's "Analogy," for classes on both, which she attended ; she had German and drawing lessons three times a week, for which she prepared very diligently, and she was ever ready for any useful work which might offer. She was always busy about something ; from early girlhood one never saw her with her hands unemployed, and the amount of work of all kinds she accomplished in this way was wonderful.

In the summer of 1852, Miss Jones made a short tour in Connemara, with her sister and two aunts, and all her enthusiasm was excited by the wild scenery of Western Ireland, while her heart was drawn out in ardent love to the poor but intelligent peasantry, many of whom are wholly ignorant of the English language, and all of whom had been brought up in utter ignorance of the truth as it is in Jesus. She visited many of the schools, and as the Romish Bishop of Tuam, with

a large body of clergy, was making a confirmation tour at the time, heard several examinations of the bright-faced children, whose answers astonished and delighted her. The orphan nursery at Ballyconree especially interested Agnes ; and the meeting again her kind friends Miss Bellingham, then Mrs. D'Arcy, the wife of the rector of Clifden, and Miss Gore, was an additional pleasure. She would willingly have stayed behind in the West, to work for God with Miss Gore at Ballyconree, in that great field so wonderfully opened up for the laborer ; and though duty called her away, it did seem as if her life-long desire for missionary work might some day find its realization in that sphere. She chose one school which seemed in special need, and for some years collected funds for the payment of its master. So brightly did she picture the delights of life among the mountains of Connemara, that a friend gave her the name of the " Recluse of Clare Island," from an island off the coast, and playfully asked her when she intended to emigrate to the wilds of the far west. The next autumn and winter were spent at Kingstown, where she found poor people to visit, and divided her time between self-improvement and usefulness to others.

Early in 1853, the family started for the Continent, and six pleasant months were spent in France, Germany, and Switzerland. While Miss Jones's journal was filled with vivid descriptions of the scenery through which she passed, she did

not permit her appreciation of the beautiful to keep her from acquiring much valuable information of the manners and customs of the people, and of their public institutions.

A few extracts from her journal will show the working of her mind at this time, and the sympathies of her heart.

“Paris, *April 25th*, 1853. — To-day we went to a meeting of the ‘*Œuvre des Diaconesses*,’ Rue de Neuilly. It was held in the chapel of the Institution, which was crowded. There are in all thirty-six sisters, two of whom are from the German parent institution at Kaiserswerth. They have three divisions or branches of labor. There are the apprentices, the penitentiary or refuge, and the ‘*disciplinaire pour les enfants* ;’ there are also schools and an infirmary. There is always a reserve fund for the support of the sisters when old, or leaving the Institution. The great want is sisters, for not only are there not enough for the work of the house in Paris, but many are also required for work in the provinces, particularly in the *Salles d’Asile*. A rival establishment of Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity has been opened near. The house of the Protestant Deaconesses has not, however, been emptied, as they predicted, but is too small. It is like the Kaiserswerth institution, which has sisters at Jerusalem, Smyrna, St. Petersburg, and elsewhere.”

Early in June the party reached Bonn, on the Rhine, where some weeks were spent very happily.

Much time was taken up preparing for masters, but the afternoons were generally devoted to long country walks and drives, which were often enlivened by the pleasant and profitable conversation of the Rev. W. Graham, a missionary to the Jews, who had been for some years settled at Bonn. On June 21st, they all went over to Kaiserswerth, accompanied by Mr. Graham, and spent a long summer's day in visiting the various schools, hospitals, and other departments of that most valuable institution. Little did they think of the deep effect that day's visit was to produce.

"The morning was dark and lowering. We rose early, however, and when about six o'clock our friend and guide, Mr. Graham, entered, breakfast was nearly over.

"Before we enter the Deaconess Institution of Kaiserswerth, let us speak of its origin and object. It was founded about thirty years ago by the Pastor Fliedner, who has since died. At the age of twenty he had been appointed pastor of the little weaving village of Kaiserswerth. A subsequent failure of the proprietor of the place involved the whole population in ruin. Penniless themselves, they could no longer support their young pastor, with whom they would willingly have shared their last morsel. He was reluctant to leave his post, but his only means of support having failed, he had no choice. Followed by many prayers and blessings, he left his people in order to seek, in Christian liberality, help for the little flock. Ger-

many was traversed, and an unseen agency led him to England. Here was to be sown the seed of that work of faith, the Deaconess Institutions, which now shakes its blossoms over many lands.

“Mrs. Fry spoke to the pastor, of poor female prisoners. He heard of her efforts among them, and his heart yearned to imitate her example. Soon afterwards, he returned to Kaiserswerth, bearing to his people the gifts of their fellow-Christians. The lesson learnt in England was not lost. Such an opportunity as he sought was soon afforded him. Two young women having been discharged from the neighboring prison, their friends would not receive them ; their former employers also were turned against them. In the hearts of the pastor and his wife alone they found sympathy. In the pastor’s garden was an old summer-house, and here he lodged his penitents. With their own hands, this faithful clergyman and his wife conveyed to them their food ; and under their own eyes employed them to work in the garden, safe from contaminating influences, and protected from the temptations of poverty or scorn. When the numbers of such penitents increased, a friend came to assist. Then arose the thought that if others would but help, an important work might be done. In the early ages of the Church, pious women had thus devoted themselves to God’s service, not as a means for their own salvation, but to bring forth the fruits of faith.

“Kaiserswerth was, in former times, an island, which derived its name from having been a gift of the Emperor Charlemagne, as the site of a monastery. The few houses it contains were taken one by one as required. These are now the pastor's house (for long ago he relinquished his parochial charge, and devoted himself to the Institution), the orphans' and teachers' schools, lodging-houses, halls, and kitchens. An addition in the rear, towards the garden and river, is the present home of the penitents. When the fame of Kaiserswerth reached royal ears, the late king granted a building opposite (formerly a home for retired soldiers) for an hospital. At a little distance, in a garden, is a new building, the lunatic asylum. The Institution, as a whole, contains upwards of three hundred inhabitants. Of these, at the time of our visit, about twenty were deaconesses and thirty novices, but the numbers necessarily vary.

“The deaconess comes to the pastor with high certificates as to character. He examines her motives, discovers whether any duties require her presence at home, — for to these he always gives the first place, and even the deaconess must, at the call of her parents, return to them. Should no such claims exist, however, she is received as a novice. As such she goes from one department of the work to another. Under the superintending deaconess, she spends a short time in the orphan-house, the training-schools, the hospitals, and the asylums. Thus she learns the duties of each de-

partment. She has also learned meanwhile something of the compounding of medicines, sick-cookery, the general management of the Institution, and the *art* of visiting the poor. All are taught to feel that it is not the amount or the greatness of the work done which meets with the approval of their heavenly Father, but that his eyes are open to the most trivial action done out of love to Him. This the spirit of the pastor, and he seeks to instill it into the hearts of all.

“Perhaps his personal character and that of Madame Fliedner should have been sooner alluded to. In many of the rooms we saw a print representing a dying female, with the inscription underneath, ‘Rien que le renoncement.’ These were the dying words of the first Madame Fliedner, the foundress of the Institution. The pastor married again. Madame Fliedner is a wonderful woman. Who could guess that the kind, motherly person you saw walking about with her knitting, or sitting in the garden, shelling pease for the evening meal, knows the history, character, disposition, and taste of every individual inmate of that great establishment. Every deaconess comes to her for counsel and direction; every difficulty is submitted to her, from the question whether potatoes or beans are to be the staple vegetable for the ensuing week; what means are to be used with some refractory or neglected orphan; what deaconesses are best fitted to establish a branch institution in some other and distant region. Never is she

or her husband found bustling through the various departments ; the quiet evening walk with the pastor, the short consultation with Madame, unfold the characters and reveal the feelings of the community. Both have a peculiar talent for government ; the former has quick insight into character.

“ A very remarkable feature in the Institution is the chain of responsibility. Each deaconess is supreme, and apparently despotic in her own department. Each is trained to be capable of establishing and governing a similar institution in any part of the world ; yet each experiences the controlling influence of a master mind, and steadily adheres to the rigid discipline of sovereign authority. The novices are the pastor’s peculiar care. Twice a week he gives them a course of instruction, which he also pursues when they become deaconesses. In his own practical and simple manner, he enforces their duties and suggests the true motive. Thus are the novices trained for a period extending from one to three years. Then, if there be an unanimous testimony to their zeal and love, and if the pastor and Madame Fliedner approve, they, on an appointed day, in the presence of other deaconesses, dedicate and devote themselves to the service of God (as in our Confirmation rite). They bind themselves as deaconesses for a period of five years. They are, nevertheless, at any time free to leave the Institution, paying, however, a certain sum for expenses incurred while there. They are free at any time to

marry ; and, if required by parents, the pastor himself urges their return home. In any of these cases, however, they are expected to do good, as far as in them lies, to the souls and bodies of their friends and neighbors, bearing in their lives and conversation the impress of those who have devoted themselves wholly to the service of God.

“Kaiserswerth is the parent, but it is not the only deaconess institution which exists. As opportunity has afforded, the pastor has sent forth deaconesses, two and two. One hundred and twenty deaconesses are thus dispersed throughout Europe, and some parts of Asia. There are large and flourishing institutions at Paris, Strasburg, and Jerusalem ; and in many other places there are smaller establishments of the same kind. One at Smyrna has been lately founded. The French residents there wished to have educational advantages for their children. Two deaconesses were sent from Kaiserswerth to perfect themselves in French at the Paris Institution. There we saw them. At Kaiserswerth, some months later, we found preparations making for their departure, and have since heard of their arrival in Smyrna. They would begin by opening a school for those whom they came to instruct, occupying any spare time with the care and education of the native women. After a time an hospital would be added, and thus step by step would they advance. If, then, helpers at Smyrna were not to be found, Kaiserswerth would send other

deaconesses to assist. Their labors are not, however, always so onerous. In France, where the sphere of the Protestant pastor's work is often too extensive for the powers of one man, a deaconess is sent to assist him. To her charge are committed the schools, the sick, and the poor. Pastor Fliedner's training, with regard to visiting the poor, is very striking. 'If you enter a wretched cottage,' he says, 'only to leave a tract, offer a few words of advice, or read a chapter of the Bible, your words may be heard, but they will not often sink deep into the heart. But enter the cottage to help the wife and mother to add some comfort to her home, or to show her some better method of nursing the sick husband or child ; then will the few words of warning or comfort find their way into the heart otherwise hardened against the story of peace. In the one instance you come only as the teacher, in the other as the friend and sympathizer.'

" It is time that we should enter the house. A few steps lead to the door of the pastor's dwelling. We are admitted into a small parlor ornamented with garlands of flowers. Louisa Fliedner, the pastor's eldest daughter, receives us. These flowers are the orphans' love-token to their beloved pastor. Should we like to go over the Institution ? Louisa can speak a little English ; she will be our guide. She speaks of the family love of the community. We go first into the orphan-house. In Prussia, eleven orphans are the

wards of the king, and receive, if necessary, a certain allowance for their support and education. This, when they are received into any institution, is paid for their maintenance. The orphans all receive the same training as children. At fifteen they have to take a prominent part in the responsible household duties,—cooking, waiting on strangers,—everything except washing, which is done in the penitentiary. At seventeen their powers are known; they may be received as novices, be sent forth as servants or apprentices, or received into the training-school in order to become governesses. When ready, situations are found for them, and they are sent out well provided for. Many, after a few years, have returned, and of their own free choice have become deaconesses.

“Behind the orphan-house is the penitentiary. Here few visitors are admitted. The washing of the establishment is chiefly done by these women. But what is found to be most peculiarly beneficial to their character is their out-door employment, of which they become very fond. One of the deaconesses, herself a peasant, used to country labor, has trained them in the care of the dairy, garden, and farm.

“The ‘seminariste,’ or training-school, is peculiarly interesting. Hither, from all parts of Germany, come young girls to be trained as governesses and school teachers. A clever governess, not a deaconess, superintends their education. They must, before they come, have attained a cer-

tain degree of proficiency. A portion of the day is allotted for their own instruction, the remainder to that of others. A village school is attached to the Institution. Its teacher has most wonderful energy, and the art of fixing the undivided attention of the children on the lesson before them. The seminarists listen to her teaching. Each, in turn, on her appointed day, repeats to the children a lesson which she has herself received from the tutor of the establishment, and rehearsed before him. He listens, and afterwards points out to her, in private, how she might have made this point clearer, or that more interesting. At the play-hours of the infant-school children, the teachers join in the games. They give lessons in botany, history, and geography to more advanced classes. They also teach reading, writing, and arithmetic to children in the hospitals. In the one large building are contained, in various departments, men, women, children, and infants, suffering from every disease, principally scrofula and consumption, in various forms. A little dispensary is attached to the building. The deaconesses are all skilled in the compounding of medicines ; but the dispensary sister was regularly apprenticed to the business. A physician visits twice a day, but neither he nor the assistant pastor resides in the Institution. There is also a kitchen for the preparation of sick-food exclusively. On a large board is marked down the number of meals of each kind of food required for the day. Each

hospital has its own superintending sister, assisted by novices ; and, in the men's hospital, by male nurses also. The cleanliness and the comfort which reign here cannot be described. Every deaconess gives part of her spare time to reading to the sick, besides the morning and evening general reading and prayer, and the frequent visits of the pastors. But the most delightful thing of all is the infants' hospital, where the poor little sufferers receive all the care a tender mother could bestow.

“Under the same roof with the hospital is the church of the Institution. Large windows opening from some of the sick wards afford to the inmates opportunities of joining in the services, which they much enjoy. It is a most affecting sight to look up and see the sick and anxious faces which crowd around them.

“The lunatic asylum is not far distant. Here are received the rich, who pay as in other institutions, and the poorer, who pay according to their means. As the asylum is self-supporting, the number of poor received is regulated by the overplus from the payment of the others. Everything to soothe and alleviate is here provided, — a garden, musical instruments, books, etc. At the head of the asylum is Louisa Fliedner. Though only about twenty-two years of age, she has a peculiar talent for the management of the patients, of whom she is extremely fond. There are several deaconesses under her. Occupation and amusement are

the principal modes of cure. Those who wish have lessons in music, singing, languages, etc. Every day the patients go out to walk, either together or singly, with a deaconess. Singing is much used to soothe and quiet them when excited. Every birthday and holiday brings some special amusement. They much enjoy a picnic party, one of which we witnessed on our second visit. They all walked out to a little farm, where tables and benches had been placed for them in the garden. Many of them assisted in the preparations for the repast, during which cheerful conversation was maintained. The deaconesses were apparently occupied with their own amusements, but every movement of the patients was closely watched. Some of the party went out in a little boat ; others walked along the banks of the river. On one occasion a girl attempted to drown herself by jumping into the river. Louisa Fliedner said, quietly, 'The water will spoil your clothes,' and walked on, apparently unconcerned. The girl immediately came out and followed her home. The day we saw them, all were quiet, and seemed to have great enjoyment of their little expedition. Our visit to the lunatic asylum over, we returned to the house.

“ Having finished our inspection of the establishment, we reëntered the little parlor into which we had first been ushered. Here we found the pastor and Madame Fliedner. Their simple and earnest manner pleased us much, though at our first visit

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we had not the opportunity, afterwards afforded us, of becoming intimately acquainted with them. They had coffee, black (rye) and wheaten bread and syrup for us ; real coffee for the strangers, the usual repast being rye coffee only.

“ The pastor had but that morning returned from a tour in England ; but, though much fatigued, was full of energy, desirous to excite all to some active exertions in the cause of God. But it was already late, and, we were obliged to shorten our visit.”

She concludes with words that seem almost prophetic :—

“ As we drove away, my great wish was that this might not be my last visit to Kaiserswerth. Surely such visits should not be unprofitable ; if the thoughts of that day be blessed, and its impressions deepened, it will not, I trust, be so. That visit was, I believe, a talent committed to our care ; may it not be buried.”

A few days later she writes :—

“ Bonn, *June 27th.* — At breakfast it was proposed, and mamma consented to the plan, that Aunt Emily and I should spend a week at Kaiserswerth, in order the better to understand the whole working of the Institution. This is more than I ever dared to hope. How thankful I should be ! May a blessing attend that visit ; may my feeble desires to do good to others be deepened and purified. The Lord has heard my prayers and answered them in an unexpected manner ; surely this visit should be an encourage-

ment to prayer, and a seal that God will answer it. Lord, thou hast in this answered my prayer ; add yet other blessings ; O give me a large measure of thy spirit. Go with us, Lord, to Kaiserswerth ; be with us and bless us. Make all things now and then to work for thy glory and our good. Sanctify us wholly ; sanctify our desires and thoughts. If thou be not with us, Satan can turn even these wishes to evil. Teach us how needful watchfulness is, especially at this time. If thou go not with us, carry us not up hence ; but if it be for thy honor and our good, take us there ; and let me not forget, that as in this one thing thou hast heard me, so thou wilt ever hear.

“ It may be pleasant in a few years to know with what feelings I looked upon the going to Kaiserswerth, for it seems to me that it will exercise a great influence on my future life. I have no desire to become a deaconess ; that would not, I think, be the place I should be called upon to occupy. No, my own Ireland first. It was for Ireland's good that my first desire to be used as a blessed instrument in God's hand was breathed ; it was for Ireland's good that my desire to find the Lord for myself took a tangible form ; it was for Ireland's good that I have prayed to be used ; and though I think, if I saw an opening, I could be content to be sent to other lands, yet in Ireland is it my heart's desire to labor. But though I do not see that as a Kaiserswerth deaconess I should

be taking my proper position, yet I do believe that, as a training-school for usefulness, some months spent at Kaiserswerth would be of untold value. I have now the desire, but not the power ; but there is not a branch of usefulness in which I may be called to occupy myself, that I should not have been to a degree prepared for. At my age, such a training of the powers and such a training of the desires would, if blessed by God, have a great effect on my character."

"Geneva, *Sept. 5th.* — This morning, according to Mr. Malan's invitation, we went to visit his school. Here we were delighted with the children, the order, and quiet. He sent for us, and we spent an hour with him. I trust I may never forget his conversation."

On her return to Ireland in the autumn of 1853, she resumed her former life in Dublin, only devoting more time to teaching in the ragged schools than she had done before. She earnestly desired more work for God, and, from her private papers, it would seem that she blamed herself for indolence and carelessness, because she did not do more ; yet never did she neglect home duties, or leave undone what was ready to her hand. She seldom spoke of Kaiserswerth, and nothing was known of her unabated desire to return there ; but there is a passage in her journal, under date of June, 1855, which shows that the wish remained as strong as ever.

The winter of 1855-56 was spent at Port

Stewart, and early in the following spring Agnes and her mother returned to the old home at Fahan House. The delight which this arrangement gave to all the party, became in Agnes's case almost overpowering happiness. She thus writes, March 6th : —

“Drove down to dear Fahan on a business expedition. O ! the happy feeling of being able to look on it now as almost our home. For some time after we came in sight of it, the thought was unmixed joy. Then the little churchyard reminded us of the dear father who lay there, and recalled to us that here is not our home, and, therefore, with the words of thanksgiving which arose to my lips, came those of prayer, that in the few years we may be blessed by remaining in that once happy and now fondly looked-for home, my own ease and happiness may not be consulted, but that I may live for the glory of God and good of others.”

CHAPTER II.

WORK WITHOUT TRAINING.

ONCE settled at Fahan, the long-cherished dream of a life devoted to the sick and sorrowful began to be realized. She was always about her Father's business, — in the school, at the bedside of the dying, and in the lowly cottage, where some sudden accident had brought sorrow and despair, and where her gentle self-possession and prompt action brought healing and hope. She had a very tender and loving sympathy for the poor, and none who saw her can ever forget her appearance as she returned from these distant and lonely walks. Her color was brightened by the keen mountain air, her curls were blown about by the breeze, and her fair, happy face was beaming with the consciousness of having brought comfort and blessing to some forlorn one. Of this work she writes : —

“ *March, 1857.* — I thank God for the great blessing of health and strength to go amongst the poor. What a sore trial it would be to be forced to cease from visiting them ! Their cordial welcome cheers me, and the hope of doing them good is such an incentive ; when I come to one who is

a Christian, and hear her prayers for me, then there rises within me a deep well-spring of joy.

“ *October, 1857.* — To-day, winter came in hail and snow and bitter cold. I put on winter array, but felt almost ashamed to go into the cottages so warmly clothed. What a contrast between visitor and visited ! Who made me to differ ? Health, strength, and this warm clothing, enabling me to go out in all weather, are talents ; O, may each and all be more and more used for his glory, who gave and can take away. A blessing to-day from old Mrs. W. warmed me so that I felt not the cold. She said, ‘ The Lord love you, for I love you ! ’ ”

Every morning when not detained by home duties, she started on her rounds after breakfast, returning to early dinner, only to start again immediately afterwards, and prolonging her absence often until the darkness had closed in. No weather deterred her ; no distance was too great ; no road too lonely. She never seemed to think it could be a question whether the fatigue or exposure was too much for her ; she was naturally strong, but often she overtaxed her strength ; and, when suffering from severe headaches, would set off in the morning earlier than usual to see some sick person, knowing that later in the day, when the pain had reached its height, she would be unable to move. Many times in winter she came back from her mountain walks with her cloak stiff with ice, and her hands benumbed with cold ; but nothing could damp her brave spirit, and the joy

of her work kept her up. During the five years she remained at Fahan, there was no cessation in those busy labors, except during one short visit to Dublin, in the spring of 1857.

Her skill in prescribing for the sick, and her gentle but firm touch in dressing wounds, and especially in cases of burns and scalds, soon became famous in the neighborhood, and the poor people came many miles across the mountains to consult her, and to get medicines, salve, and other articles. The turf-fires on the cottage hearths, round which little children often gather without much watching or care, are the fruitful source of many severe burns, and, on such occasions, Agnes was always sent for. Sometimes it was a very fearful sight that met her, but she never shrank from anything because it was painful, if she could but relieve suffering ; and day after day she would go to dress the burns, until her care was no longer needed. She was so considerate, too, so thoughtful of their comfort ; never forgetting to take cake or fruit for the poor little sufferer, to beguile it during the painful dressing, as well as more substantial food, where that was needed. Romanists as well as Protestants were visited and cared for ; she made no distinction of creed or sect in ministering to the needy ones, and wherever she was allowed to do so, she never paid a visit without reading at least a few verses of the Bible. Then she would say a little by way of explanation, so simply that the youngest child could understand,

yet so earnestly and practically that none could listen unimpressed. Her own deep sense of responsibility, and the tenderness of her conscience, ever ready to condemn herself, made her often mourn very deeply over the apparent want of success attending her visits. A few extracts from her journal, at different periods, will help to bring her life more vividly before the reader:—

“*Nov. 15th, 1856.* — To-day I went to old Mrs. D.; she seemed very low, but I trust her hope is sure. My thoughts went back to former visits. Have I really set the whole Gospel before her? How humbling to go time after time, and feel such want of words and want of power in setting Jesus forth! As I went into a new cottage to-day, many doubts arose. When I can do so little in speaking awakingly to those I visit, why go to more? but this was a temptation to yield to my foolish timidity. He who knows the thoughts answered mine, for when I left the cottage, a stranger came up, saying, ‘I hear you lend tracts, and should be glad of some.’ This is, indeed, encouragement, for which I thank God. The promise is beginning to be realized to me, ‘He that watereth others shall be watered himself;’ for when I read and try to explain a chapter, passages strike me with a force of which I knew nothing when reading alone.

“*March 14th.* — Mrs. L. died yesterday. The last words I heard her say as I supported her in my arms, were, ‘I will fear no evil, for thou art

with me.' This was about twelve hours before she went to be with Jesus. Hers was no deathbed repentance, — long ago that was all done, and peace with God was hers. I felt ——'s death too much, and the circumstance that, of none who have died since I came here, could I look to more than a hope of a death-bed change; I prayed that the next might be one of whom I could feel certain. The answer came when little M. W. and Mrs. L. joined the heavenly choir."

"*April 18th.* — It is long since I wrote. Passion Week, with its sacred services and many privileges, is passed. The coming week seems to promise trial of a kind which I feel most sensibly, and yet cannot explain to friends. I am going to E.'s wedding; gay scenes are before me; may I not by my narrow-mindedness disgrace the holy name I bear, and put my Saviour to shame. O, may I have grace to perceive and know what I ought to do to preserve the right medium. How beautifully appropriate is this week's Collect, 'Follow the blessed steps of his most holy life!' O, for some of the spirit in which He went to the marriage feast! O, so to shine in his reflected light as to attract some to Him, and not repel them from Him!"

"*October 3d.* — Went up before breakfast to see Mrs. B., who I heard was worse. A party of friends were staying in the house, and I was to take them to Dunree, so feared I might not have time later. She seemed happy; no murmur; not

the old longing for death, but a trusting dependence on Christ's finished work for her. As we sat at breakfast after my return, Mrs. P. came in a distracted state ; her child was fearfully burned. 'The doctor is from home, and the minister is from home, and O, Miss Jones, you must come ; all my dependence is on you.' I could get no particulars from her, so collecting all I thought necessary, I rushed off up the hill and arrived at the cottage before the mother. The child was indeed a fearful sight ; from the waist upwards a skinless mass ; the water they had thrown over it to extinguish the flames had brought off the skin ; it lay shivering in the father's arms, wrapped up in cloths wet with buttermilk ; the house was full of neighbors, and before I could do much the mother came in. Her screams were fearful, so both for her own sake and the child's I persuaded her to leave the house. With flour and cotton I dressed the wounds, merely putting flour on the face, and left it, feeling almost hopeless. I was little inclined for our day's excursion, but our friends were waiting and we started. On my return I asked eagerly, and was told the doctor had seen it at two o'clock, and said it could not live.

"It died at eight that night. I went up next morning as I had promised. I dreaded the going, but found the neighbors gathered in, and I in a crowd when I would have given worlds to be alone ; yet I was glad I had gone. I was asked to read,

and did so. I scarcely know who were there, for I could not see well, but they seemed to be mostly men, and some to whom I have not spoken before. I tried to say none were too young to die, and to speak of the only preparation, and so bring the question home to each: Am I ready?"

"*April 28th.* — A Sunday at home, doing nothing, but, I trust, learning much. I had overtaxed my voice, cold settled in it, and for some days it has been inaudible. It seems as if by taking it away for a time, my God were going, as it were, to take my education into his own hands; it may be to force that preparation of the heart, that learning of Him and from Him which came before Isaiah's lips were touched with the live coal, and he was sent forth to teach others. God grant that I may learn his lessons! And though it will come home sometimes that it is a severe trial that I cannot make my poor hear me, yet that very feeling shows how much I need the lesson, thinking, as it were, that I cannot be done without. Lord, if it be thy will to take away my voice for long, draw me nearer to thyself and teach me to know thee more, to sit at Jesus' feet and learn his word."

In November, 1856, as nearly as can be determined, her Aunt Esther gave her a Treasury Bible as a birthday gift, and she thus speaks of it in her journal:—

"This morning came aunt Esther's birthday gift, — a Treasury Bible; a new talent given to

me ; Lord, give me grace to use it aright. And do bless the kind and loving giver, and enable me more and more to show my love to her."

A few passages from her journal about this time may show how she meditated on God's Word, and drew from its sacred pages the strength and comfort for her daily walk :—

"*May 12th.* — For some time I have been cheered by the words, 'The hand of the Lord is upon all them for good that fear Him.' On them, leading them to seek Him ; on them, when they have found Him, for good ; making all things, every little incident, every text they read, every good thing they hear, every thought He suggests, teach them some lesson, lead them some step onward. Yes, his hand is in all things on his people for good."

"*Nov. 3d.* — I have for some nights gone to bed thinking over that sweet text (O that I could enter in to its depths !) Jeremiah xxix. 11, 'I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end.' 'God so loved the world that He sent his Son to die for us.' God pleads and entreats with us to come to Him ; He bares his heart to us that we may see the love laid up there for each and all ; 'I know the thoughts that I think towards you.' You, every one of you, whosoever will appropriate to himself these words : 'I, the Lord, who search the heart ; I, who am not a man to lie, but the Lord Jehovah, I say to you, poor

sinful, wretched, lost sinner though you be, I know the thoughts that I think towards you.' And what are those thoughts? Are they consuming, destroying thoughts? He who cannot look at sin might well say, 'I will destroy them in a moment; I will not spare.' But no, the thunders of Sinai would but harden the heart; the tones are of the still, small voice; they declare God's thoughts to be of peace and not of evil."

"*August 13th.* — I was much struck to-day by Job xxviii. 25, 'He weigheth the waters by measure,' contrasted with John iii. 34, 'He giveth not his Spirit by measure.' He weighs the trial and affliction He sends, lest one drop too much should fall to his people's lot; but for the good gifts of his Son and Spirit there is no limit. 'Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it.' It is a word of reproach against his people that they limited Him. They took not somewhat of Him, — took no heed to the promise, 'Ask, and ye shall have.'"

Volumes might be filled with passages such as these, showing how deeply she thought, and to what an extent her character was founded upon the teachings of the Scriptures. But the quiet beauty of her home life must be described. It is to be constantly remarked that in striving to do good to others outside of the home circle, she did not neglect any of the sweet ministries of woman at the hearthstone. Visitors in the house saw the simple, unaffected girl, so quiet and unpretending, though ever ladylike and cheerful, and knew noth-

ing of the deep inner life which was the motive power of her consistent walk. But they could not fail to see what has just been mentioned, that while her days were spent among the poor, no home duty was ever neglected, and her mother's slightest wish would at all times make her give up her own plans. Long before the party assembled in the breakfast-room, Agnes might be seen returning from the garden, laden with flowers, which she delighted to arrange in the sitting-rooms with a skill and taste quite peculiar to herself. If the servants happened not to be sufficiently skillful to undertake all that was required, she would spend hours in the kitchen preparing confectionery, etc., and when her mother came down in the morning to give orders, she frequently found that Agnes had been in the kitchen from five o'clock, and that all was prepared. In all the arrangements of the farm and garden she took the greatest interest, and was ever ready to do anything to help her mother, and save her from anxiety and fatigue. On first coming to Fahan, it had been sometimes a great trial to her to give up her visiting of the poor, when guests at home required her attention ; and she even questioned with herself how far it was right to yield the point, but it was not long before her peculiarly just and calm judging mind had discerned where the line was to be drawn ; and it was often a marvel to those who knew where her heart lay, to see with what sweet cheerfulness she would devote herself to the amuse-

ment of the friends and relatives who visited her home during the summer months.

A year and a half after her mother and she returned to Fahan House, her sister had been left a widow, and once more joined the home circle. Those only who knew the deep tenderness of dear Agnes's character, and the intense love she ever bore her sister, could guess at the affectionate sympathy with which she watched over her at that time, and how with gentle persuasion she drew her on to join her in walks and visits to the poor: the desire to give her an interest again in life making her forget her timidity, and admit her even to her Bible readings in the cottages, where she learned many a lesson from her simple, practical teaching. Of her it might indeed be said, whatever her hand found to do, she did it with her might; she saw what many, alas, of the good and useful people of the present day fail to see, that God may be obeyed and glorified as truly in the small details of domestic life, if done unto Him, as in the greater missionary work abroad.

The following extracts are from letters written by Miss Jones to the Secretary of the Young Women's Christian Association:—

“I desire to be regarded by all as a Scripture-reader; everything else I try to make subservient to this great end. The system of lending tracts I have adopted, not only for their own sake, but also that their regular exchange may serve for an excuse, as it were, to enter the house, Bible in

hand. I find my way thus made easier among the thirty families where this system is carried out; but for this, I should often find an excuse, as I do sometimes among the others, to allow my call to merge into a mere visit. The sooner I begin, the more readily is it understood. If I cannot stay long, they feel that the 'one thing needful' is to be the first object, though, in this case, I try to return soon again, and spend a time in listening to their tales of sorrow and difficulty, longing to be regarded as a friend, and trusting that as such my message may come home to their hearts, through the Spirit's blessing on my instrumentality. I do not like to weary you by multiplying cases, but select those in which I am myself most interested. On a mountain slope there lives a family, formerly without any religion. One of our summer showers suddenly swelled the mountain streamlet into a torrent, by which a child was carried off. All night the parents searched in vain, till the morning light revealed the sad tale. I had never seen the family before this time, but was then asked to visit them. I cannot read their hearts, but I do know that both parents listen attentively to God's Word, and I receive many thanks for my visits, and am entreated soon to return. The father, a shoemaker, lays aside his work and does not resume it until the last word is said. The mother is a very young woman, but both her own and her husband's former family will, I trust, have cause to bless God for this

accident. . . . My last visit before leaving home was at the house where I called to-day. About a year ago, a young woman — a Presbyterian — ran off with a Roman Catholic. Her parents were very angry, and till her baby was born, when the mother went to her, she never saw them. Whether she ever went to chapel I do not know: her child was, of course, taken there to be baptized. Within the last two months they have come to live in my visiting district, and, when at the house where she lodged, I saw her two or three times. The husband, however, was always present, and as I had not known her family until after she had left it, I felt I must not appear too much interested in her at first. Last week I paid her a visit in her own house, having received a message that she would like to see me. The husband was out, but a stranger was there, before whom I felt I must be cautious. The poor girl's eyes filled with tears when I went in, and she looked so glad to see me. I spoke of her parents, and saw how her mother's rare visits were prized, and her father's continued estrangement mourned over. I told her that I saw them sometimes, and lent tracts to her brother, who liked them much. I watched the effect of this, for I was doubtful what to do. I longed to take advantage of her husband's absence to speak to her, and, a tailor being generally at home, I feared to lose the opportunity, and yet dreaded to get the poor thing into trouble, were the woman who was present a Roman Catholic.

I prayed for direction, and finally offered to lend her tracts and to read a chapter to her. When I was leaving, she thanked me with tears, and begged me to repeat my visit. Yesterday, among other places, I went to her mother's house, determined to urge her family to visit her and be kind to her, fearing much the effects of her being left entirely to her husband's family. I therefore spoke of my visit to her and of her contrition for the step she had taken, dwelling on the steadiness with which she has of late withstood all efforts to bring her to the chapel; for a time none of them spoke; then the mother said, 'I would not be able to explain the contentment it was to her to see you coming to visit her.' She then told me that the poor girl had said so much about my visit, and that she was thankful I had lent her the tracts before her sister-in-law, though she had 'scowled on her' when she saw it. She was anxious, too, for a Bible our clergyman promised her. All this I mention as showing the poor girl's state of mind; her great distress is, lest the baby should grow up to return on her her conduct to her parents. Poor thing! I believe she is truly penitent, but in a most difficult position. I want you to pray for her and for me, that I may have wisdom given me in dealing with her.

"I want more zeal and earnestness in my work, to speak more to the people of the dear Saviour I have found. I am naturally very reserved, but I find to get influence over the poor, the more

• openly one speaks the better. I may not have much longer to go among them. My voice is each day more easily tired, and sometimes, after reading in three or four houses, I have to return home, unable to exert it again that day. At home, when trying to read aloud in the evening, my voice fails me in about ten minutes. This makes me long the more to work while I have time. I have done little good with that voice, but to be able to continue reading God's Word to the people, as I have tried to read it for the last year and a half in this place, is my desire ; if He has need of it, He will give strength. One learns by going among so many different characters, the depths in God's Word, — its applicability to every circumstance ; its strength and power is so felt in contrast to one's own weakness and ignorance. I am sure the more we know for ourselves the certainty of the words of truth, the more we shall be able to answer those who send to us. That promise is such a sweet one to take and plead at every cottage-door, — the promise of the Spirit to teach all things and bring Christ's words to our remembrance."

CHAPTER III.

HER TRAINING AT KAISERSWERTH.

IN 1853, Agnes first saw Kaiserswerth, and longed for work there ; not until 1860 was the wish granted. She waited God's time patiently and obediently, and when He saw fit, He made the way plain for her. How little we know what the apparently insignificant circumstances we seem to mould ourselves may bring forth to us. In September, 1860, Agnes had, for some time, been looking pale and thin, yet could not be induced to take rest, or in any way relax her exertions. An uncle, who had come to his home in Ireland for a few weeks, was to rejoin his family in Germany, and one morning it was suggested at the breakfast-table, that this might be an opportunity for paying her long-talked-of visit to Kaiserswerth, availing herself of his escort for the journey. At first she seemed to think it impossible she could leave her sick and poor ; but in a day or two she spoke of it again, and said she felt she might learn there much that would be useful in the parish ; so it was settled that she should go. There was little time for deliberation, for her uncle was to start in two days, and she left for Dublin, saying she

trusted a month, or at most six weeks, would see her again at home. Her mother and sister rejoiced at her being thus forced away from the long mountain walks which they felt were too much for her strength, and hoped the complete change of air and scene would restore her failing health. Little did they think she was never again to be with them except on passing visits.

The arrival at Kaiserswerth is thus described :—

“After parting from uncle at Cologne at 7 o'clock, I began to feel very nervous about my reception, but a strong word came to my weakness and helped me, ‘Why art thou cast down? O my soul, hope thou in God.’ An hour and a half at Düsseldorf before a train started which would stop at Calcum, was trying; had I known the delay would be so long, I should have sat down to read or write, but I thought every moment my train would be up. At last we were off, and soon I was on the platform at Calcum; some deaconesses were starting, but one remained, so I addressed her; she could not tell, however, if I were expected. We put the luggage in the omnibus, but I was glad, after only two hours of sleep last night and three nights of very disturbed rest, to have fresh air and walking; then my hobbling German began, and so we came to the door of the hospital. I was left in the hall till some one should find what was to be done with me; after a long wait, a summons came to the pastor's house; the mother

came in and said I should live in the hospital, in the sisters' part, and so brought me over and gave me in charge to Sister Sophie, the head of the hospital. She led me to a dear little room, the window opening on the garden, across which I see the orphan and the pastor's house. After a little, I was taken to Sister Reichardt's room, where I sat and talked till 12 o'clock dinner; then my luggage arrived. I unpacked and dressed and went with Sister Dorothea to the women's hospital; Sister Carietten came to take me over part of the house, — the women and children's wards, work-rooms, kitchens, bakery, etc. Coffee at 2 in my room, and then with Sister Dorothea to see the wounds dressed in the hospital. At 7 tea, returned to my room, and at 9 to prayers."

"*Saturday.* — Prayers at 7, then to women's hospital; dressed some wounds, etc. Sister Dorothea, of whom I am sure I should have grown very fond, went off to replace a sister at Graefeld almshouse for the sick and old. Sister Amelia takes her meals with me; she is the cutter-out of dresses, etc. Sister Maria was with me one evening; she was an orphan here, and became deaconess; she had just returned from Dresden, and is so fond of this, she hoped to remain here, but heard to-day she is to go elsewhere. After dinner I paid Sister Sophie a visit in her room, and was told to be ready at 3, dressed in black, for the funeral of Sister Joanna, who died on Wednesday, and for whom the bells have been rung daily from

12 to 1 o'clock. Sister Maria came for me ; we found the deaconesses assembling in the yard, where was the coffin with six bright, silvery-looking handles, and surrounded with a long wreath of cypress and white dahlias. After a little, Pastor Disselhof (Louisa Fliedner's husband) came and told the deaconesses, before leaving, what they were to sing. They sang four verses standing as they were ; then the town children walked on, the pastors, six men carrying the coffin, other men, and the band ; then the deaconesses and others, three and three, and so on, singing and moving slowly, we came to the 'Gottes-acker ;' round the grave we stood, — the open grave with the coffin laid in it ; a hymn was given out and sung, and then Pastor Disselhof, as if blessing the grave with uplifted hands, repeated, 'O death, where is thy sting ?' He then read Luke vii. 11–16, and made a brief address.

"At 7 o'clock this evening the bells rang for half an hour, — joy bells for the morrow. In the mention of Sister Joanna, they always speak of her as the 'home-gone sister,' — *unser heimgegangene Schwester*."

"*Sunday*. — The preparation for next Sunday's communion. Read at prayers at a quarter to seven, 1 Cor. xi. 13. Sister Carietten prayed that this Sunday might be a day of growth, — of being clothed anew in Christ's righteousness, — a day in which we might more entirely give ourselves to Jesus, and feel what a blessed thing it is to

live for Him, to work for Him, to devote our strength to Him who first loved us and gave Himself for us. The prayers for the king are very beautiful, for the queen and all in authority, the pastor and the mother. I helped to dress some of the wounds ; then church at a quarter before ten. They first sang, then read the same epistle and gospel as our own, then Proverbs vii., then a prayer ; after which, those were desired to remain who wished to receive the communion next Sunday. A confession and absolution, and a kind of form of self-examination, was read by Pastor Stricker, whom I do not yet well understand ; at each part there was a pause : then, ask yourselves these questions, and let all who can join in answering yes. The Lord's Prayer and the beautiful Levitical blessing closed the service. Soon after, the sister came with an invitation from the pastor for me to dine with him, which I did at 12. He spoke little, for his cough is very severe ; first the text for the day was read, then the Psalm by his children, and dinner began, — soup, plates of gruel, which was sweet, with raisins in it ; then boiled meat, beans, and potatoes ; afterwards fresh plums. After dinner the pastor gave one of his sons a poem to read aloud ; he read a few short missionary anecdotes, and we sang a hymn before grace was said. Then the sisters who are to go off to-morrow were told of their journey arrangements, and one, for the first time, heard she was to go. The pastor told me I might, after service

at the village church, go out with the parish sister on her rounds. I did so, and came back at 3 to the service, which is, on this Sunday in the month, more of a missionary meeting. At 5, went to the sick and spent a few minutes with Sister Reichardt before 7, then supper of rice and milk. From 8 to 9.30, I was at Sister Carietten's teaching of the 'Probe Schwestern;' she certainly enters into the spirit of the 'Haus Ordnung' (Rules of the House), of which she read paragraph 9, the family bond; the deaconesses and novices owing obedience to those over them as children to parents, — the spirit of being ever ready to serve God in our fellows, remembering, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' All must be in the spirit of love, — not to gain love for ourselves, but to draw hearts to the Lamb of God. To hold ourselves ever in readiness to serve Him, to think nothing too small, and so we shall be ready for greater works and further submission, if He sees fit to call us to any great work."

"*Tuesday.* — Breakfast and prayers, attending patients and sitting with them. Tried to explain a little of Luke xv. to Louisa and the others, before dinner; afterwards went with Sisters Emilie and Frederica to the churchyard. At 2, the 'Lied Stunde,' which is Sister Carietten explaining the Scripture references to the hymns; then Sister Reichardt's; then I went back with her to her room for a talk, which I always much enjoy; then

to the sick, and helped in the dressings, etc., till after 6, when I went to visit Sister Sophie, who is very kind to me."

In a letter home of this same date she says: —

"I am as happy here as the day is long, and it does not seem half long enough; but with all my contentment, till your letter came yesterday there was something wanting, and now I am looking forward to more home news, so you will think me greedy. Except a little with Sister Lebussa — a countess who is nursing-sister here, and who speaks English well — it is German all day, and I think I am improving. Every one is so busy here, one can't spend much time talking, but had you seen our lively walking party to-day, you would not have feared my being moped. Their love for Miss Nightingale is great; she was only a few months here, but they long to see her again. I have not seen Louisa Fliedner yet, but have heard her husband preach twice so beautifully; he speaks so clearly and slowly I understand him wonderfully well; he is a tall, remarkable-looking man, and with his old-fashioned preaching gown, especially when, as at the funeral the other day, he wore his cap, reminds me always of one of the old Reformers."

"Journal, *Wednesday*. — Hospital: read to Louisa 'Jesus nimmt die Sünder an' (Jesus relieves sinners), and talked of it to her. Went to ask Sister Sophie to let me dress as a 'Probe Schwester,' as I think then both sisters and sick will

allow me to do more when my dress does not every moment remind them that I am a stranger and a lady. Every Wednesday evening Pastor Disselhof has a Bible class for sisters, in the hall. Unfortunately, I was far off and could not hear well, as he spoke low."

"*Friday.* — Prayers, Luke xv., and a beautiful prayer on the chapter. Then I, having made my bed and arranged my room before breakfast, went to the hospital, and am to-day happier than I have yet been, for I was allowed to do many little things for the patients, — make beds, dress wounds, hear a child her lessons, and help a blind one in her preparation for the pastor's evening class. A little after 1, Sister Sophie came to tell me the pastor was waiting in her room to see me. I went to him, and after giving me a book on parish work, he asked me to walk a little in the garden with him. He is most anxious I should spend the whole winter here. Lord, guide and direct me, teach me what I should do; if I am to stay here, show me thy will; if it so please thee by putting it into the hearts of others to give me work, by enabling me to do anything that comes in my way, with a single eye to thy glory, and by helping me to get on with German. Lord, let me learn what thou seest best to prepare me for any work thou mayest yet call me to. Enable me to grow in the knowledge of what may help others, but, above all, in the knowledge of thee my Saviour, from whom comes the will to work for

thee. Every day and hour I feel this is a place where they understand training, and where one may, slowly, perhaps, but all the more surely, be really grounded and brought on. The pastor said such a true word, 'We are too apt to be contented with spending our own strength, and not think enough of training up others to take our places, when God 'sees fit to remove us.' At 2 o'clock, went with Sister Sophie to visit Frau Pastor Disselhof and her lunatic asylum ; I should anywhere have recognized the Louisa Fliedner of old, but her three fine children keep her now too busy to be, as formerly, the superintendent ; and though she still has the direction of the Institution, Sister Amelia, who took us over it, is the active head. At 5, I returned to the hospital much engrossed with the thoughts of the letter I wrote to my mother before going to bed, about remaining here for the winter. It seems the wisest plan, now I am here, but God can show me my way clearly. If I am to stay, I trust He will be my Teacher, and prepare me for whatever He may call me to do, if He so honors me as to allow me to work for Him ; and if it be to return, O, how gladly shall I meet my own dear ones, and return to my loved people and happy work. The indecision kept me awake nearly all night, and I trust that my wakefulness may be blessed to my choice, enabling me, as it did again and again, to seek direction from Him whom they call here so beautifully, 'Unser heimsuchen Gott' (our home-seek-

ing God). I trust by all now and hereafter He may lay upon me, it is more and more seeking to bring me home to Himself."

"*October 1st.* — Met Sister Sophie, and asked her to let me wait for my dress before I go to the men's hospital. I am very nervous about this going, and want to be as like those usually about them as possible, no distinguishing mark to make me seem different. Read to Caroline Romans viii., which she seemed to enjoy; then to Louisa, and taught the little girl her texts. At 3.30 to the church for the 'Stille Stunde' (Still Hour), which lasts thirty minutes. Two verses of a hymn are sung, then each reads or prays quietly for the rest of the time. At 4, one sister repeats aloud the Lord's Prayer, and we separate; I, to the English lesson I am to give daily to Sister Lebussa; then preparing the sick for the night, and a short time in Sister Sophie's room. Sister Carietten came to see my room to-day; she said, 'I like its number, 103, it reminds me of the 103d Psalm.' I thanked her in my heart for the word. Truly I can say, 'Forget not all his benefits;' how many and great they are!"

"*Tuesday.* — Found my dress in my room on returning from Pastor Disselhof's class; as soon as ready, I went to show myself to Sister Sophie, and ask for my new name. 'Sister Agnes.' She said she would take me this evening to the men's hospital; so, after giving my English lesson, I went to her. Sister Maria in the wards is differ-

ent from any sister I have yet come in contact with, but she seems very handy, and well-fitted for her post. I hope I may learn much from her. I go with trembling, but it encourages me to feel I have made friends here, in the sorrow of the sisters and patients in the wards I am leaving. Truly, it is of the Lord. I, a poor stranger, scarcely understanding or understood, have found favor through his loving aid, have been led so far, and kept from 'Heimweh' (homesickness), and even here am called to do a work for Him as one of his. I almost feel as if the Lord had some purpose in bringing me here; He is so keeping me from undue longing for my friends and people."

"*October 3d.* — I cannot express all that the affection of the women in the hospital is to me. It is more (with reverence be it spoken) as a revelation of the presence with me of Him who is the ever present friend. A busy day for me, which is also a blessing to be thankful for, kindness heaped on me on every side. Why? I cannot tell. Whence? Surely but of the Lord, and yet to-day there is a burden on this poor little faithless heart. The difficulty of understanding and being understood; perhaps I have not been exerting myself enough to get on with the language. In the morning, helped in the women's ward till breakfast. At 7, to the men's hospital. Sister M., to my great delight, put me at once to work; first washing the glasses, etc., used by the sick during the night, then dusting and washing

furniture in the bed-rooms, seeing the dressing of the wounds, etc., washing up of breakfast things, and then I was sent to sit in the room with a dying man. Could I have chosen my work, it would have been this ; but, O, how I longed for words ! and yet, I feared to speak, partly, because he was too weak for the exertion of mind to understand me ; partly, because I was unwilling he should know my ignorance of the language, lest he should be nervous at the thought of my not understanding his wants. But I could pray for him, and it was so sweet to think One was there who could do all without my help, and who could hear my prayer, and answer the poor sick man's oft repeated cry, 'Lieber Heiland, hilf mich' (Beloved Saviour, help me). His constant cough was very distressing, yet he scarcely seems to me so near death as they think him. After dinner, returned to my post. At 2, Pastor Stricker's class ; then my English lesson, and then to men's hospital again till 7 ; after tea, a visit to Sister Gretchen, and then to the female wards to say good-night to my friends."

One or two letters to her mother, about this date, give further details of the proposed change in her plans.

After describing her new mode of life, she gives an account of her interview with the pastor, and continues :—"He then spoke most wisely and kindly to me about the uselessness of spending only six weeks here. Till to-day, never had the

thought of a longer stay here come to me. But there was so much wisdom in his words that this day has been one of much thought on the subject. It was hard to tear myself away from home and poor, but now I am here, is it not better to stay and learn thoroughly, not by halves? on the other hand, is it leaving a plain, clearly given work for another? Were my life to be limited to a few years at Fahan, six weeks here might do; but what, if longer life is before me, may I not be called and enabled to do more, if prepared with God's blessing? But, O, my heart goes so after my people! Whatever you decide for me, mother darling, to return home or to remain here is alike to me. So much is to be said on both sides, I feel either would make me happy, and yet in either I shall have something to regret in losing the other."

"Journal, *Thursday*. — A fortnight here, and in looking back, I can take courage and go on trusting Him who has helped me hitherto. Got up very headachy, but went at 5.30 to the hospital; made beds, etc. till breakfast, then back to work: the dying man is weaker to-day; read to one ill with dropsy John v. and a hymn."

"*Saturday*. — A walk to-day with some convalescents; still undecided about the winter, mamma's letter leaving me free choice when I had hoped to have the decision made for me. May God guide me; home, country, and poor are very, very dear, and yet, now I am here, should I not stay and learn?"

She writes to her mother as follows : —

“ A thousand loving thanks for your letter, received Saturday, and for the free choice you give me. It is hard to choose, for home is home, and kind friends are not mother and sister, and a strange tongue, keeping one on the strain in speaking and listening, is a barrier to free intercourse : still I am happy here, and when wishes will go homewards, I think of the future, and pray to return wiser and better, to enjoy a hundred times more, and feel, O so deeply, the blessings of a home. To me the deaconess calling is a problem ; as a Christian, feeling and knowing I am not my own, and that all time and strength and powers are to be rendered back to the Great Giver of all, I think every one is as much called on as a deaconess is, to work for Him who first loved us ; but if this does not constrain us as Christians, neither will it as deaconesses, and certainly the ‘ Anstalt ’ (Institution) is a world in which the Martha-spirit may be found as well as in the outer world. There are many most deeply taught Christians here, many whose faces shine ; but I should say, comparing my home life (but few have such a home) with that of the deaconesses here, I should say, that in many positions here, there are more, not only daily, but hourly temptations. There are great privileges ; teaching, worship, means of grace, two pastors for the Institution besides Pastor Fliedner. While he lives, he will be the ruling spirit, but it is in the direction and supervision

of all, by private walks and talks with the deaconesses, — by writing books and letters: he is too delicate for anything public. It is wonderful to think that he is the head of upwards of fifty establishments; 250 deaconesses and nearly 400 novices, — this is twenty-four years' work. The pastors are most evangelical and earnest; Pastor Stricker, who has for many years been here, is one deeply learned in the Scriptures, but Pastor Disselhof is to me more attractive, because more easily understood. I longed on Sunday for Aunt J.'s power of reproducing a sermon; his, though quite extempore, was so perfect in its arrangements, so clear and earnest, so simple yet attractive.

“ I have gone far, however, from what I sat down to write of my plans; yet plans I cannot call them. I can say, as the German so beautifully expresses it, ‘*Der Herr ist freundlich*’ (the Lord is good to me), for I am happy and contented; and yet when one comes to look into the life here, it has scarcely a point of resemblance to what I have been accustomed to. I do not find time for half I want to do; I am in the male hospital, under such a clever trainer, she will not overlook the smallest thing, and yet is kind withal. I give an English lesson every day, and my pupil is going to give me a German half-hour. My idea is to remain here as long as I feel I can learn anything, and then perhaps to go to Elberfeld, or one of the other institutions near, and then home soon

after Christmas ; but, of course, circumstances must influence ; we plan, God arranges and directs. I often ask myself, Why is this ? Why have I chosen to stay here ? Theoretically it is easier to have my free will at home, than, as here, to have to be under orders, — even at school or meal hours I must tell the head sister why I leave the room, etc. There is more variety and seeming usefulness in visiting my poor, than in trying to please little children or feeding sick ones, the greater part of the day ; and yet, though I so theorize, I feel it is good for me to be here, whatever may be before me. God has given me a happy, contented spirit ; may He only enable me, more and more to give my heart and soul and spirit, as I have given myself, more entirely to Him. Home, and my loved ones and poor, never were so dear.”

“ *Wednesday.* — Last night, indeed since Monday, very unwell, and to-day I had to lie in bed and the doctor came ; but though feeling worse than I ever remember to have done before with dreadful spasms, and fearing a long illness, God kept me quiet and enabled me to feel only my many blessings ; only for one moment did an overwhelming longing for my mother’s hand about me, come over me, and that, perhaps, was allowed to show the blessing of being kept so peacefully contented. ‘ O, forget not all his benefits.’ Such kindness and love from all around ! I chose to have read Hebrews v. and Psalm xxvii., and felt them to come home.”

“ *Thursday.* — Weak, but out of bed, and sat in dear Sister Sophie’s room some time ; read a little and enjoyed the ‘*Stille-Stunde*’ in the church ; thankful for strength to go there.”

“ *Saturday.* — Sat much of the day with Brunnig, who still lingers ; at night studied the Gospel as of old for Sunday-school, and hope to make it a practice every Saturday, and, with God’s help, to find a blessing.”

She writes to her mother as follows :— “ Your last letter amused me very much, dear, over-anxious little mother, so, to put your mind at ease, let me tell you, first, as to fires in our rooms, we have stoves and every requisite, and here, in five minutes, with no trouble, one has a hot fire ; but I never have one, and enjoy my cooler room, for the hot, dry air from the stoves is very trying ; then, as to the cleaning of my tiny room — it is a simple, quiet process in the style adopted here, and I need not do it, but as there are no servants and the deaconesses do everything, I was shamed into doing all myself by seeing my neighbor, who is eighty, every day cleaning her far larger room. I have now only eight classes a week, for the ‘*mother*’ thought I had too many lessons to give ; my pupils had really become a most engrossing interest, though at first I found my classes a nervous and difficult business ; now I am, with the exception of my class hours, from 7 till 7 with fourteen sick boys ; some, to my sorrow, are too well, for the walk with them, and, worse still, the

keeping them at lessons or work is no easy task when I am left, as is sometimes the case, in sole charge. The very sick and very young ones are a great interest, but I get on wonderfully with all, in spite of my want of the art of government. I am often a subject of merriment, as you may suppose, from my ignorance of the language ; but, to my delight, I can now teach the sick and very young their texts. I do sometimes long for home-sights and voices, my mother's face and kiss, and for special walks and views at Fahan, for all my poor ; how often they are thought of and prayed for ! I want to know so much about them all, — they can never think of me more than I think of them, — I could send a thousand loves. The pastor is more and more a wonder to me, — his great desire to make his work reproductive ; he told me he was so disappointed to find Mrs. Fry's work, about which they had consulted together, so much a limited one, as he says the nurse's sphere is so limited in comparison to what it might be, and also that there is no attempt made to raise them by mental culture ; when one sees the new-comers here often, one feels what a work of love and patience will be needed before they can be made gentle or refined, and this last word is what, to a certain point, might apply to all the deaconesses ; there is such gentleness and refinement even about those whom one knows to be of the lower classes ; it is not to say they are perfect, — all speak of peculiar temptations, and of besetting

sins, but there is such a repose even in their activity. On Saturday there was a telegram from Pastor D., from Syria, for an immediate reinforcement of sisters ; so that afternoon two started off to bid their parents good-by ; they returned on Monday, to leave at daybreak on Tuesday. The parents of one were sickly and old, and they objected to the distance ; in such cases, the pastor always makes home the first duty, and sends the sisters there at any time they are really wanted ; so a sister who was to have gone to Berlin goes to Syria instead. She arrived here on Monday night at midnight, heard the change in her destination, and was off before 6, so it is sometimes quick work ; but I do not see how, when one's life is given, it much matters where it is spent. The rule here is that every sister visits home every third year."

"Sunday is the great day here for celebrations, so yesterday was the harvest-home. The girls and orphans having helped in the field-work, had the 'Feste' in their respective houses at 7 o'clock. There had been great preparations going on all day, — wreaths of flowers and every variety of vegetables displayed, all done with so much taste ; it looked very gay when Pastor Stricker arrived. After reading and explaining the 100th Psalm, he said grace, and the feast began with the most horrible beer-soup, which all seemed to enjoy, but I could not touch ; potatoes fried in butter, onion-salad, and cold sausages, etc. Then the pastor,

sisters, and mother told stories, which, with singing, kept us till 9.30. The mother's stories interested me much, being on the subject of answers to prayer, and trials of faith as to the supply of the money wants of the Institution."

"Journal, *Oct. 21st.* — This has been a day of varied feelings ; the communion was to be administered to the four sisters who are leaving, and any others who wished to receive it. Pastor Fliedner was able to take a part in the service ; and, indeed, one felt it good to be there to hear the simple yet impressive prayer after the confession, and, above all, the thrilling address to the sisters before administering the Sacrament. He repeated the narrative of the angel feeding Elijah with food, in the strength of which he went forty days on his journey. ' So too,' he said, ' are you called on a journey, but it is a high calling, a following in his footsteps who went forth to seek the lost. You need strength not only to meet outward, but inward temptations, and you have well done that you have come, in these outward symbols to seek to grasp the inward thing signified. You, too, friends and acquaintances, who will thus bid your sisters farewell, have well done that you have come.' At 7.30, after the dressings of wounds, I bid adieu to the men's hospital, and Sister Lebussa came to me for a long farewell ; we may never meet again, but I shall not soon forget her kindness to a stranger, and hope I have learned a lesson from her of sympathy and tenderness.

"We then went to the hall ; before the pastor and mother were ranged to the right the nine last arrived novices, who were to be welcomed, and to the left the four sisters of whom leave was to be taken. After a few words of prayer for blessing, the 121st Psalm was read ; the 'welcome' sung, and a prayer for help in the difficulties and trials before them, for blessings on their work here, and for perseverance to the end ; the pastor and mother then went forward and shook hands with each, adding a few words of welcome ; then the pastor gave an address, showing his views and object in sending out the sisters ; then he read Psalm xci., and spoke to the deaconesses. Hymns appropriate to the occasion were sung, and then the Levitical blessing from the pastor, he laying his hand on the head of each ; he and the mother then took leave, she lingering to whisper a few last words. Friends pressed round ; Lebussa and I ran together into the passage, hoping for a few quiet minutes, but we were separated in the crowd, for it was late and not a moment to spare ; so I came to my room, having indeed lost a friend, and yet I like to call her one, who has gone to help Syrian Christians, sent by England's means to the work. It was 9.30 when they started ; they were to travel all night, and arrive late to-morrow at Berlin."

"*Nov. 4th.* — I come over from the other house every morning at 6, the ground white, and windows frozen over ; often at 3 in the afternoon the water outside is still frozen, yet night or morn-

ing, I never put on bonnet or handkerchief, unless when I go out for a walk. I was practicing cupping on a patient last Saturday, but must have another trial soon. All here are so kind, but no place is like home ; so if you wish for me at any time, only say so, and gladly and uncomplainingly will I go ; do remember and believe this."

"*Tuesday.* — Pastor Fliedner having desired me to be at the seminariste at 8, I did not go further than the woman's hospital before that hour. I found the young women all arranged behind their desks, and the teachers in their places. After singing and prayer, Pastor Stricker read part of Psalm cxix., and spoke on the passage ; Pastor Fliedner then addressed them in a most affecting manner, so that there was scarcely a dry eye in the room : ' My dear daughters in the Lord, I bid you heartily welcome, and I must speak a few words to express my welcome ; seeing fifty-eight of you here, I cannot but exclaim, " My soul rejoiceth in the Lord, for He hath regarded my low estate." I rejoice to see you all here, coming in the desire to learn how to lead little lambs to Jesus, to be fellow-workers with Him ; but remember, he that worketh must be first partaker. I feel grateful to those parents who have intrusted you to our care, and entreat of you to be open with the mother and me, and to come to us for every sympathy as you would to your own parents. I rejoice, too, when I look forward ; if you are faithful, what lambs you may bring to the fold —

what harps and crowns add to that white-robed multitude now before the throne !’

“ I returned to the ‘asile’ (asylum) and spent the day there ; some were busy digging potatoes, most washing, churning, and preparing supper. The rules were read to me, as they must be to every new-comer, and again every month or six weeks, before all assembled together, when the daily conduct book is also read ; in this are written the punishments found needful, and all particulars of the dealings with each. The inmates are all to come to the asylum of their free will, with the full knowledge of the design of the house being to teach them of the Saviour, and to bring them to Him ; and so coming with free will, it is hoped they will receive the instruction here given thankfully and with gratitude to God for having led them here. If, however, punishment be needed, it is various. For sleeping in church, inattention at prayers, Scripture reading, etc., they are shut out from such services, and, at the same time, from any pleasure or amusement, the walk, the singing-class, etc. ; perhaps kept in their own room apart from others. This last is also the punishment for disobedience, quarrels, unwillingness to work. Sewing is placed in their room, a Bible, hymn and prayer book ; but when confined there, the food is plainer than that of the others. Sometimes the idle are deprived of a meal, especially when they have to be placed in the ‘Dunkel-Zimmer’ (dark room), which is not, however, quite

dark, but a bare closet with only a small window in it ; there is the straw with which they are to make mats as their only occupation, — they are only released on begging pardon. The greatest punishment is expulsion, seldom resorted to, and when it must be done, the girl is given in charge of the police. New-comers are kept apart from the others. None are put out to service under a year, some are kept over two. They are then placed in service carefully sought out for them ; while there, they are written to and visited, from time to time ; another service found, if needed, and if they are in want, through no fault of their own, they are assisted. When placed out, they receive clothes and everything necessary, Bible, hymn-book, etc. The eve of their departure is a holiday. If, however, any wish to leave the asylum before their term expires, they are not allowed to go before they have spent some days quietly in their rooms, where it is hoped they may come to a better mind ; for which the sisters pray for and with them. Here are received all who had been in prison, whether thieves or otherwise fallen : full particulars of their former lives must be given to the sister before their coming ; no reference is afterwards made directly to it, and every pains is taken to prevent their talking over their sinful doings to their companions. They rise at 5, wash, dress, make their beds, and, when ready, come down to the sitting-room, where they learn their versès ; read or work till 6, which is prayer-time,

then breakfast ; work till 9.30, bread and coffee, work again till 12 ; dinner, return to work at 1, having half an hour's liberty between ; 3, coffee ; at 7, supper ; 8, class or working hour ; at 9, those who rose at 4 for washing go to bed, the rest not till 10. Scripture lessons are given during the week, and reading and writing lessons to those who require them. Every month the girls have different work, — kitchen, attending cows and pigs, house-work or washing, field labor, etc.

“Went to the funeral of the lady from the lunatic asylum : she was a true child of God, and his Word could quiet her at all times ; though here she walked through a dark valley, now she sees Him whom she loved. Her favorite psalm, 65th, is true of her ; she is now praising Him in Zion.”

“*Saturday, Nov. 10th.* — Classes in morning, and at the asylum all day. Being my birthday, I was specially anxious to have time for the ‘*Stille-Stunde*,’ and found it indeed what the name implies, for I was there alone. On coming to my room afterwards, Sister Sophie came in to wish me many happy returns of the day, and a year rich in blessing and growth in grace ; it went so to my heart, this unexpected greeting, and the more so, as my own mother’s letter had come yesterday. As soon as we were seated at supper, a few verses of a hymn were sung outside the door, and a plate was brought in with a pretty wreath lighted up by little tapers. I ran out and found a gathering

of friends ; inside my wreath was a little marker and a paper with a few texts, and when I came to my room, there was a lovely bouquet and another paper of texts. Precious tokens of Christian love in a far land ! ”

“ 20th. — The whole day in the asylum. Pastor Fliedner sent for me in the evening ; the deaconesses are to come to me for separate English lessons ; the pastor, as a father would for his children, begged me not to be too hard on them and require too much preparation. Love is indeed his motto. He asked how I got on ; I said I felt so ignorant. ‘ O,’ he said, ‘ love will help : that is the needful point.’ They say he can be very stern, but if he wounds with one word, he salves the wound with the next.”

We must again supplement with extracts from letters, as the journals are much interrupted at this busy time :—

“ *November.* — We had a most interesting service yesterday, when two of the asylum girls were confirmed ; the Wednesday before, at our usual midday service, they had been examined before the congregation. The Confirmation service was much like our own, the only difference that to the last question, instead of a simple answer, each girl took an oath on the Bible and gave the pastor her hand, in token that, with God’s help, she would be faithful unto death. Then to each he gave a Bible with a few words of advice and a text. While we sang hymns, the Communion was then

administered. In the evening we had a Feste, —rooms lighted up and ornamented with flowers, etc. All was so simple and earnest, pleasant, yet never forgetting the solemnity of the day.

“I am so delighted with the Advent-tree. A fir-tree is brought, to which hoops are fastened in four tiers ; on each hoop seven tapers are fastened ; the children are gathered in the room, and the questioning begins at the very beginning of Genesis. When the fall of man comes, the room is darkened ; and when the first promise has been repeated and explained, the child who could repeat it takes a card or colored flag on which it is written, lights a taper, and ties on the flag ; so on, till one promise for every week-day is given, and seven tapers and flags are placed on the tree. Each Sunday in Advent a new hoop is filled in this way, and all the facts and promises are thus graven on the children’s minds. I always feel it as a token of God’s good hand upon me, that I am not over-anxious or unhappy about home. It is not like me to be so contented when far from my dear ones, so I feel it as a token of its being his will I should be here. I hope when I go home I shall have solved, one way or other, the as yet undecided question in my mind, as to the benefit of deaconesses over Christian workers. One point I have long decided, — it is no antidote against sin or temptation to become a deaconess, but whether one so set apart can really be more useful than other Christians of similar earnestness is my prob-

lem. Of course the training is invaluable, but I should say that, taking a deaconess and another Christian of the same standing in grace and training, the latter might do as much as the former ; the only thing is the training both in outward and spiritual things. I have an idea that if there were a system of parish deaconesses, with sufficient relief funds at their disposal, it might really be better to attend the poor in their homes (except the very wretched) than to bring them to a hospital ; the variety of people, and the want of quiet to read or pray must be very trying."

The following extract from a letter written while on a visit to an uncle and aunt at Bonn gives interesting facts about the celebration of Christmas at Kaiserswerth :—

"The mannerism and formal politeness of general society do not contrast favorably with the simple loving spirit of the Christian circle at Kaiserswerth. But I must tell you of my doings there, the last few days. We were very busy all morning, on Monday, preparing the hall, which is the great public assembly-room, with seats and benches for the party for the hospital Christmas-tree ; then collecting all, first washing and dressing our fourteen boys, taking down and settling those who are most ill in the best places. One poor little deformed child of twelve years, and yet scarcely as large or as heavy as a baby of so many months, little Otto ; he is so covered with sores that it requires the greatest skill to touch, much

more move him ; now, to my great delight, I can do everything for him ; at first I could have cried each time I touched him, for between real pain and pettedness, he used to scream so ; he was put into a baby's crib just under the tree, the others ranged behind on low benches ; we novices stood against the wall behind the deaconesses : the large hall was crowded, and yet such order and quiet, and all was ready punctually at 4.30. The tree, with all its lights, so light and pretty,— nothing is put on the trees but paper-flowers, gold and silver nuts, small apples, and a few little ginger cakes ; on the top are four large gold-paper flags ; round the room, on benches, were plates filled with gingerbread, apples, and nuts ; near, or under each, the presents, labeled and so arranged that among the three or four hundred, each could be found in a few minutes. The mother and Pastor Stricker took their places. After singing, some questioning followed on the promises learned during Advent ; then some stories were told ; then an address, specially to the sick, closed by singing ; after the presents had been distributed, all retired in order, each laden with gifts ; most of these have been sent in from well-wishers to the Institution. Such an evening as we had in the hospital, and such a time for days afterwards, — drums and flutes and all kinds of music, for none of the children were too ill to make a noise. On Christmas morning, or rather at midnight the night before, there was such a lovely sound, soothing, but dis-

tinct, of the hymn sung under the pastor's window, and heard in all parts of the building ; the singing at morning prayer was a real Hallelujah ; at 9, the morning service and Communion ; at 2, another service ; at 4, the Orphan House Christmas-tree, at which my class presented me with a lovely little paper-basket of flowers. The way in which everything is done is so simple and genuine, that a little thing they give is far more valuable than what costs ten times as much. In the evening I went over to the pastor's house to ask leave to be absent for a few days ; while I was there, we heard singing outside the door ; I knew it was the deaconesses come to sing for the pastor, as he had not been able to be among them that day, his cough being so bad. He made them all come in ; tears poured down his cheeks as he listened to his favorite hymn of praise ; then he said a few words, exhorting all whose hearts were at this time specially warmed by the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, to try and spread that warmth to other hearts. He then spoke of the work in Syria, whence news had just come, and where he hoped the last travellers had arrived that day. More than fifty orphans, besides widows and young women, have been already gathered by the sisters into their three houses in Beyrout. Another branch is to be established at Tyre or Sidon, and I think it likely another party may be soon sent out. Do not say I have given up Fahan. I have faced the possibility, and asked myself were it

needful, could I do it? One cannot look far forward, nor do I think it right to build castles in the air save to count the cost. I feel my present training may be for a far distant future. My life at Fahan was perhaps a more teaching school, as far as the inner life is concerned, than my present one."

She returned from Bonn, and writes :—

"*January 1st.* — To my great joy and gratitude, was in church at 11.30. The clock struck 12 in the middle of the service, and we were startled by the sudden burst of the wind instruments and singing of the New Year hymn. My duties are now in the children's hospital, all ages from two to twelve. It is a new life for me in a nursery of sick children, and a busy one, too, for every moment they want something done for them ; I have the charge of giving the medicines, too, which is no sinecure. I am in such admiration of the superintendent's patience ; no matter what one does or forgets, I never hear a word of reproach."

"*Monday.* — Just before I posted my last letter, the alarm was given, 'The water is coming.' It had been hoped the danger was over, the thaw seemed so gradual, but this morning we heard the Moselle had risen much last night. The approach of an invading army could scarcely cause more commotion, and no wonder. Five years ago, the water was eight feet deep in the dining-rooms, and kitchens. Every one was set to work, but in military order ; there was no confusion, though the re-

moval of the contents of the dispensary, shop, three kitchens, three eating-rooms, two work-rooms, and sleeping-rooms of about 30 people to the upper floors was no easy matter, and yet at 7 supper was ready as usual. We had a prayer-meeting at 8 o'clock, and now all are in their beds. To-day's Psalm, 91st, seemed so appropriate, so we can lie down in peace and sleep ; for our keeper wakes for us."

"*Thursday.* — The Rhine has already sunk 26 feet, so, I suppose, we shall soon get back to our old quarters."

The exact date at which the idea of going to help the deaconesses in Syria occurred to her, cannot be fixed ; the letter has been given in which she first mentioned it to her mother, but it is without a date, and it was probably not received until January. This is confirmed by a detached paper in her journal, which, though also undated, seems to belong to this time.

"*Saturday.* — This evening I came to the resolution to write home for permission to go to Syria. It is no new thought, though it rather quickly and unexpectedly came into action. Before coming here, an almost unallowed, but not less realized motive was that of preparation for the next call for nurses, and Syria was even the spot with which the thought was associated. Suddenly the determination came as I sat in the hospital, and with prayer for guidance, I sought Sister Sophie's advice before writing home. She was busy, so I

sent her a few lines before going to bed, and slept undisturbed by anxious thought. In order not to do the thing hastily, and to give due time for prayer and consideration, I determined not to dispatch my letter before the usual day. May God guide and bless me."

"*Sunday.* — Longed to impart my thoughts and hear a word of advice, and yet the undisturbed mind keeping unswervingly to the purpose was a support. It will be a new and difficult life, but God can strengthen. O, may He comfort my mother. May the motto which nerves me, nerve her. I seem to hear, 'The Lord hath need,' and yet till the answer comes may He keep me in prayerful and not over-anxious waiting. It was 7 o'clock before I could see Sister Sophie. I told her, and asked her to pray for me. She answered, 'As the Lord shall give me grace to do so.'"

"*Monday.* — As I sat this morning in the hospital, I felt so strongly the force of the words, 2 Cor. viii. 5, 'first gave their own selves to the Lord,' and prayed to be enabled to do so. The morning passed, and as my pupils left me, I took up my Bible to search out more on the verse which was so on my mind. A knock came to the door; it was Sister Sophie bringing a message from the pastor. I felt he knew, and with a beating heart I entered his room; the usual kind welcome greeted me, and then in a most solemn, earnest manner he began to say, that having heard of my wish to give myself more to the

Lord's service, he thought he could put before me a more urgent call nearer home. A letter from Miss Nightingale, and the spread of Popery in England, seemed to have suggested what I soon found was his plan. But I could never, however willing, be qualified for the post he proposes; however, I gladly accepted his offer of training. To be fitted for a far lower post will indeed be a blessing and honor far beyond what I could ask or think. What am I, who have been so unfaithful in little, that I should now be called to come up higher? I could only say, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord,' but it was too much filled with thoughts of self and outward disqualifications. This proposal has, however, opened my eyes, and will, I trust, yet more, to my own inward shortcomings and want of heart-love."

"*Tuesday.* — This morning, felt so oppressed with the thought of my unfitness for the calling put before me, that I could not help returning to my room after prayers at 7, and remaining there till my 10 o'clock class, in prayer and reading, specially passages from Jeremiah xxxiii. Wonderful words indeed I read, promises, invitations, encouragements. The pastor proposed yesterday, that I should be gently trained into the habits of obedience and duties of a sister, specially in the hospital, then by degrees given a higher position; in spring, a visit home, an interview with Miss Nightingale, a return here, perhaps to be tried as the head of some department, and then,

if by God's will and aid qualified, ready in autumn to work with and under Miss Nightingale. Such is his plan ; to me it seems impossible. Under others, gladly would I act, but I have not the qualifications or self-reliance to be a head, and have neither age nor weight for such a position as he offers. The Government Nightingale Committee and the Evangelical party to provide, — the one, nurses ; the other, true; faithful, Christian deaconesses. He would hear no objection, so all I could say was what most heartily I could answer, ' Time, strength, and every talent God has given me, most gladly will I devote all to Him as He enables me.' The pastor spoke so kindly, ' Here am I,' is all the Lord needs. The training will be invaluable, but not for the sphere he thinks ; that could never be ; perchance the Lord will favor me with a call to a wholly devoted but lower sphere in his vineyard. The only objection to Syria in my mind is that Ireland was ever my first aim. England is nearer than Syria ; perchance, it may after all be Ireland. The two requests go together in my letter to mother, one for months in a far country, the other for the devotion of a life. God help her, whose sacrifice will be the greatest. I could not help sending 1 Sam. i. 27, 28."

Early in February she was placed in the responsible position of superintendent of the boys' hospital, doubtless with a view to train her in directing others, and to test whether she were really as deficient in governing power as she herself be-

lieved. It was no easy task; unruly children, little accustomed to control, and well enough to make a noise and resist authority, while her want of fluency in the language was still a source of trouble to her, and created many difficulties in her intercourse with them. She writes at this time:—

“Had I not too much to do, I should sit down and cry sometimes over the perplexities of my present position. As one of the head sisters said to me, ‘It is not as easy as one would think to be a superintendent.’ I have the smallest number in my charge of any of the hospital departments, but I think, in many ways, the hardest to manage, for ruling boys is what I never had a talent for, and some are so naughty; then my former comforter, Sister Sophie, being now my head and judge, I never come across her without being found fault with. Last night I put a very naughty little boy in the corner, whereupon he screamed and tore at everything in the wildest manner, and not knowing what to do, I put him supperless to bed; he began to scream, and Sister Sophie came in and blamed me for not being more firm with him. This morning he was again naughty, and the same scene was repeated; Sister Sophie came in and sent him to an empty room, where he was left for two hours, and returned quite subdued. Sister Sophie, however, spoke to me very seriously, and said she had not time to govern the children for me: I must not let this occur again. My as-

sistant, too, tries me sorely ; she is willing, but so slow. I feel very hopeless of succeeding, and fear abusing the kindness which has honored me with the charge. To-day when out walking, I could only keep from crying by running races with my boys. From 5.30 A. M. till 7 P. M. I never leave them, and then sit in their sleeping room from 8 till 10. I fear I offered myself thoughtlessly for a work I am not qualified for ; however, it is well to find out my deficiency in time."

" *Thursday.* — I am really more hopeful, for matters have gone on much better, and I did not get one reproof to-day. My boys made and kept a resolution to improve, and I had no great rebellion. It is easy to contend with one or two, but when all unite against 'Tante Agnes,' as they call me, it is no easy task to procure peace. This morning, Sister Sophie told me it would be well for me to witness an operation to be performed in the men's hospital. I went, knowing no particulars, and found it was the removal of a finger. The man was under the influence of chloroform, and after all was finished, the doctor was afraid the dose had been too strong, and had to use violent measures to revive him. The knowledge he could not suffer made me witness the whole thing quite calmly, but it would be dreadful without the chloroform.

" The cleaning and keeping my dominion in order is such a business. Sweeping and washing the floor of the three rooms every morning, two

stoves which must be black-leaded weekly, each taking an hour, weekly cleaning of windows, tins, dinner chest, washing of bandages, etc., besides the washing up after each of our five meals, — keeps one busy. I am beginning to feel quite a motherly love for my boys, and they improve daily.”

“ *Sunday.* — I was so amused to-day at Pastor Stricker. He came into the room as my boys and I were going to dinner. He speaks English well, and, having been tutor in an English family, knows the customs in England. Now I am so accustomed to my way of living, it never costs me a thought; but a soup-plate of vegetables with a bit of meat on the top, sent up with the children’s porringers, and set on a cloth which, with all my efforts, I cannot keep clean even two days, much less seven, is certainly rather a contrast to mother’s dinner-table. ‘Do you eat here?’ asked the pastor. ‘Yes, always with my boys.’ — ‘It must be a great self-denial for you; your habits are so different?’ — ‘O, I never was better or happier.’ — ‘Well,’ said he, ‘I trust it is you are one with Christ,’ and so he took his leave. I now generally take a turn in the starlight, on my way to my room when I leave the hospital at night, and the same heavenly lights seen at Fahan bring happy thoughts of both the earthly and eternal homes, and often tears of joy and thankfulness for my happy life and many blessings. The Kaiserswerth Scripture Calendar, compiled by the pastor, is a

very good one. I must send you a copy. It gives a morning and evening portion, the midday Psalm, and the day's text. Monday's was Luke xxii. 24-30 compared with John xiii. 2-20. 'I am among you as he that serveth' seemed to come to me in a new light. O, to follow his footsteps more truly, not only in the outward but in the inward and spiritual sense of the words. I often wonder, will there ever be deaconesses in England. I cannot, however, imagine the amalgamation of ranks and duties there being carried out as it is here. It would be difficult to draw the line, and yet I often cannot but regret that so much of the sisters' time is taken up with the most menial occupations, so that the 'Stille Stunde,' two or three times a week, is the only time for quiet reading and prayer during the day."

"*April 8th.* — It is a solemn time, as, in the hush of night, with the smell of death so strong in the room that it is almost unbearable even with open windows, I keep watch by Otto, who has now been twenty-four hours in the last agony; now the unconscious screaming of many hours is over, but there is still the working with clinched hands, the grinding of teeth, and at times the death-rattle. O, I feel so thankful no poor mother has had last night's and to-day's watch; it would have been agony to her, though we quite believe him to have been unconscious since 1 o'clock last night. But it teaches one something of the depth of Psalm xxiii. 4, 'Thou art with me.' That can truly be

the only comfort in such a time. This night will end my Otto's life, as it ends my superintendence of the boys ; for I am to go to-morrow as helper in the women's hospital. This is a quiet, solemn time to review my two happy months with my boys. May the crucified and risen Saviour cleanse me from the guilt of the past, and give me power for the future. Every night I used to pray with Otto after they were all in bed, and he used to put his poor little arm round my neck as I knelt beside him ; but last night he said of himself, ' I will only now pray that Jesus may take me to heaven, and that I may soon die,' and as I had put my face near to him to hear, he said, ' Lay your cheek on mine ; it does me so much good.' "

" *April 10th.* — I am now at home in my new station. I have the entire care of four women, also of the medicines of the twenty-four in the ward. My own special charge have sore legs, which must be hourly attended to, beds made twice a day, rooms cleaned, etc. ; then, as far as I can, I help with the other patients. I have such delight in the women, reading to them is like reading to my poor at home."

" *April 22d.* — No deaconess has the perplexities of choosing her own position, or deciding on her own movements ; unfortunately, I am not so pleasantly situated. But you must have the history of my difficulty, or you will not understand the sequel. Saturday's post brought me a letter from Mrs. Ranyard, which roused many conflict-

ing feelings. First, an invitation to be in Hunter Street on the 27th, to be in time for the Bible Society Meeting on the 1st May. Then she says, 'A friend is building a house for me in St Giles's, a dormitory for fifty girls, besides our rescue home. Your mother would sooner see you settle in London to help me in the great work of Bible-women, etc., than that you should go to Syria.' She then proposes that I should come to her to supply a want of some one who can devote time to visiting and inspecting the various missions, and assist in the choice and training of the Bible-women, besides managing and establishing these homes. The proposal seems perfect in every way, and I only felt not good enough for the work ; besides, to leave this so soon, not to return, is a trial. I was prevented by my duties going to speak to the pastor on the subject, and, meanwhile, a large letter was handed me from Mr. —, inclosing a plan for a proposed home for nurses. He writes to ask if I will go to the St. John's Wood training-hospital, to be prepared by Miss Jones there, for two or three months, and then take the superintendence of this nurses' home, which is to be connected with the infirmary in —. Most patiently and kindly did the pastor give me a whole hour and much valuable advice. He says he would in no way influence my choice ; according to a German proverb, 'One's own heart and one's God are the best counselors.' At the same time, he feels the work Mr. — proposes might be a centre from

which boundless good would radiate, if it be really made a training-school for Christians, as well as nurses ; that to introduce the true and all important element might be my work, and so, if God give grace, I might be the heart, even if after training I cannot be fitted to be the head of the work. He advises me to go to London for the May meetings ; I shall then have the opportunity of meeting many people, and hear the views taken respecting such work. What am I to say, when such work is before me ? Sometimes I think the question may well be asked of me, ‘ With whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness ? In the pride of thy heart thou aspirest to greater work, thou, who wast not found faithful in that which was least.’ And yet when I look back and see how I have been led from step to step hitherto in a way I could never have imagined, I can only say to God, ‘ I bring a willing mind, and if, with all my shortcomings, thou callest me, here am I, only do thou touch my lips with a coal from thy altar.’ With a heavy heart I shall leave what has for seven months been such a happy home, to go again among strangers, but as here I could say, I am not alone, so there will He be with us.”

“MALINES, *Friday*, 6 A. M.

“MY OWN DARLING MOTHER, — While waiting for the train to Antwerp, from whence we hope to sail to-day at 1, I must try to note down a few of the sad but sweet remembrances of yesterday. I

really knew not how I loved and was loved till the parting came. Sister Sophie comforted me with the words of some German writer, 'Those who love in the Lord never see each other for the last time.' If I could tell you of half her love and kindness! She was indeed my 'Mutter Schwester,' and when I thanked her for all her loving care, 'O,' said she, 'your affection and gratitude almost make me ashamed.' She shamed me by her thanks for what she called my confidence and obedience. The pastor, too, begged me to write, and promises help and advice whenever I need it. Had I gained nothing but this, it would be much; for the counsel of such a man, with all his experience and large-heartedness, single aim for God's glory, and simple, childlike faith, one feels is the highest wisdom. He is liberal in his views, but as he said when I was speaking of the Broad Church party, 'One must not be so broad as to forget there is but the narrow way to heaven.'

"The future is as yet all uncertain; I feel the way must be made very plain for me. Mrs. Ranyard's proposal is most attractive, and would be a good training for work; still, as my leaning to it may arise from its being a comparatively easy call, I shall wait till the other way is closed before I look at all the attractiveness of this. Still, I do love hospital work, and feel it is a position of boundless usefulness to train nurses."

Thus ended Agnes's personal connection with

Kaiserswerth ; from the first day of her arrival there, she had thrown herself completely into the routine of the place, submitting herself to its discipline, and taking up whatever work the pastor appointed for her. Sometimes it did seem a waste of power when she was obliged to spend so much time each day cleaning lamps and stoves, sweeping floors, and doing other rough work, which sadly tried her delicate hands ; of this her friends only heard when she lamented her uselessness in the hospital for some time, as she had to keep her hands poulticed and bandaged from the injury they had received. At the same time, we must remember that much of this was voluntary work, which she chose to do rather than leave it to the deaconesses, as well-born and as delicately nurtured as she had been, in whose daily routine such offices were included. Implicit obedience was one of Pastor Fliedner's imperative requirements ; and Agnes often said she owed much to her training in this respect at Kaiserswerth. Her greatest pleasure was, however, in the hospitals, and there she became daily more convinced that nursing-work was her vocation. For years she had delighted in visiting and tending the sick in the neighborhood of her country home, but now she felt within herself powers which had not before been called into action. One day, soon after she went to Kaiserswerth, she was in the children's hospital when the doctor arrived to perform an operation on a baby for a harelip. The sister from some

cause was absent, and the deaconess in charge turned pale when asked to hold the child. Agnes came forward: "May I take him?" The doctor looked at her and said, "No. You would faint; you have not been tried, and experience is necessary in these cases; a trembling hand or a momentary faintness might be most injurious to the child." But Agnes still asked, "Do try me; there is no one else." Perhaps the doctor saw the firmness in her calm brow and steady eye, for he allowed her to take the child. She never wavered while a firm grasp of the little sufferer was necessary, but when he was laid in his crib, and she got away to her room, she indulged in a good cry, yet felt, as she wrote to us, very much pleased at the discovery of her nerve. After this, she was tried again and again, and always with the same result; it seemed strange that with her peculiarly tender, sensitive, and sympathizing nature, she could bear thus to witness suffering, but God had given her the power so to realize the ultimate good that she was nerved for the preliminary trial, and many were the cases, during the next few years, when her presence and strengthening words soothed the hour of mortal agony. But in all the occupation and numerous calls on sympathy and interest, her home and her poor at Fahan were never forgotten; every letter is full of messages to the cottages where so much of her time had been spent; none were forgotten, and her friends there were continually reminded by her that such a one should have

blankets, another warm clothing, another nourishing food. It was very painful to her to think that they would not understand her leaving them, and that it must seem to them like forgetfulness or caprice ; but truly she sought *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness ; and where she believed He willed her to go, there she went without a murmur.

CHAPTER IV.

HER WORK IN LONDON.

WE must now go back to the summer of 1859, when Miss Jones and her sister went to London with their only brother, who was to sail thence to Australia. After his departure, while remaining a short time in town to visit some of the ragged schools, homes, and reformatories in which they were interested, a friend kindly introduced them to Mrs. Ranyard, the editor of the "Book and its Missions." The revival movement that summer, in the North of Ireland, attracted the attention of many English Christians, and when in the autumn rest was declared necessary for Mrs. Ranyard, she proposed visiting the places where God's blessing seemed to be so richly poured forth. She paid a short but very happy visit to Fahan, and Agnes afterwards joined her for some days at Portrush. Mrs. Ranyard's two young daughters, full of life and joyous brightness, with all the fair promise which delights a parent's heart, were with her; a few months later, the elder, a sweet and most attractive creature, was taken up to the better land, where God gathers in his loveliest flowers. The pressure of a work

which could not be laid aside, even when grief for such a loss needed quiet and repose, seemed almost more than human strength could bear ; and in the letter Mrs. Ranyard wrote to Miss Jones, offering her work in London if she could come there from Kaiserswerth, she still further urged the proposal by saying she really wanted help in this time of sorrow and depression.

Her mother and sister arranged to meet Agnes in London, but circumstances delayed their journey, and she had been three weeks in Hunter Street before they arrived. Never did her sweet face look brighter or happier than when she greeted them that day, after their eight months' separation ; she was already fully engaged in the Bible mission, and, for a time, the thought of hospital work was laid aside. An extract from one of Agnes's letters, written at this time, may be given to show her feeling on the subject :—

“ I want a life-work to employ the faculties which God has given me : they are not many or great mentally, but they are his gift, and I desire to devote them to his service. I should not enter a sisterhood, even were I free, which I am not, from home ties. These are my first duties, but there seems now to be a time which I am free to spend as I like, — that time I want to employ while I am young, in being trained for some sphere of usefulness, in which, if spared to maturer age, I may be employed. Whether I may now enter on a course of training for such a

post as that which has been proposed to me in Liverpool, and for which there seems no course open, save that of entering as one of the Nightingale probationers, at St. Thomas's Hospital, for a year ; or whether I seek, in the practical experience of work under Mrs. Ranyard, the knowledge I need, is now my difficulty. The one is preparation for future work ; the other is immediate entrance on it. Did I see my way clearly, I could delight in either sphere of labor, though there is no doubt which would be, for the present, the easier post ; that is not my aim ; it is, how can I work best for God ?

“Miss Nightingale kindly and plainly put before me the trials of association with uneducated though respectable women, as my only companions during the year's training ; but though I fully realize what it would be, I feel as if I could meet it, were I called upon to do so. Trustfully and prayerfully have I left it in the hands of my heavenly Father, and if He incline not my mother's heart to allow of my going to St. Thomas's, I shall thank Him that He has provided me with another field of labor.”

As her mother could not bring herself to consent to the hospital training, it was arranged that Agnes should remain with Mrs. Ranyard, and after two or three weeks her mother and sister returned to Ireland without her, feeling quite satisfied that with such kind and watchful friends, who cared for her as if she had been their own

child, she would be perfectly happy. Very few are the letters or notes from which we can gather details of the next few months. Her time seems to have been chiefly occupied in preparing the Parker Street Dormitory (which was opened by Lord Shaftesbury on the 5th of June, 1861); superintending the furnishing and arranging of this home for girls, and of the refuge in Dudley Street; holding mothers' meetings in one district and another where the lady-superintendent was absent or ill; inquiring into the character and references of proposed Bible-women; and in every way making herself useful to Mrs. Ranyard.

One of her first letters from London is as follows:—

“MY OWN DARLING,—I seem to miss you more and more every day; even the peeps at you, and feeling you near, were more of comfort than I knew when I was murmuring at not being oftener with you. I hope you are enjoying those lovely green fields and hedges and trees, and the peep of the church from your bedroom-window, as I did two years ago when staying at Highfield. I never thought so much of the beauty of trees and flowers as now; but I am happy without seeing them, and shall be daily more independent of their enjoyment when in full work. I do so look forward to beginning my dormitory Bible class on Sunday. Think of me from 2.30 to 3.30. It is like Fahan work again. I trust I may be taught to teach.

“Yesterday I went with Mrs. Ranyard to see

two lifelong sufferers who yet rejoice in the Lord. The first, Betty Jones, whose fall down-stairs thirty-two years ago, caused not only such injury to the brain that sound is agony, but brought on a large tumor in the neck, producing asthma ; — to prevent the suffering from the heat of the bed, the head and neck are placed in a plate. The doctors say the least elevation of the head would cause circulation to cease at the heart, and instant death; yet the whispered words in which she speaks of ‘Blessed Jesus, in everything suitable,’ ‘Just the Saviour suitable for me,’ and the look and motion of the hand, all tell He is hers. Nothing ever moves her, she is so firm on the Rock. Drury Lane is close by, and the night the theatre was burned all were in alarm, and, for her, death seemed inevitable ; to move her was death, and all was in flames around, the air full of sparks and burning timbers, one piece of which, entering the chimney of the next house, set it on fire ; ‘The Lord actually carried it over my chimney to the next,’ she said in heartfelt gratitude ; and so in her closely curtained, darkened nook, she waits the dawn of eternal day.

“Through endless streets and lanes we threaded our way to visit Sarah Bird, of whom you have read in Mrs. Ranyard’s magazine ; the poor creature who has but the use of her thumb ; she, however, seemed to me in luxury compared to poor Betty ; she can read and bear light and noise, and enjoy speaking and listening, and her bright ex-

pression told more than the words of thankfulness which poured from her lips, of the peace within. She, too, has her trials, but she said, 'I am ashamed to talk of my suffering when I think of all Jesus suffered for me.' I am to go to doctor her, for the eighteen years in one position has caused sad bedsores ; of all her body, she can only move her head, but she says, 'Is it not a blessing, though, that I can do that, to see those texts on my wall? Why, look there, Ps. xxiii. 1, "I shall not want." Want! I was very 'near it once, but see now how rich I am.' What do you think of my having so much to say of the Rescue-house? I never chose it, but it seemed put before me, and daily becomes more my charge. I feel as if in the way of duty I shall be kept from harm. The only thing is, I can scarcely help crying when I am talking or praying with the girls ; still I do not think that harms them, and it does not me. They are so impressible and impulsive, but it seems over in a minute."

" *Wednesday.* — Between business letters for Mrs. Ranyard, extracting from the Bible-women's journals, and studying their boundaries and the locality of Bible Society's depots, I might have my days fully occupied in the house, yet I have plenty to do out of it besides. All yesterday afternoon was taken up with a *réunion* at the most magnificent of houses in Kensington Palace Gardens, then tea at Mrs. Bayley's, and a peep at a mothers' tea-party. To-day I thought, How shall I get

through all my business at the houses ? And then at breakfast other duties were so mapped out for me as to leave me not a moment for them, and so one day's business seems rolled in another, while each brings its own special work. We are to have a great day at Walthamstow on the 31st."

"*Monday.* — Industrial kitchen ; Victoria Docks mothers' tea meeting, — twenty-two present. In evening Clerkenwell mothers' meeting, most interesting. I do so enjoy my work, though I have only time to give you the heads of it ; the people in Parker Street seem to prize my Sunday class, and some who have gone to situations beg leave to come to it whenever their mistresses can spare them. I paid poor Mrs. P. my second visit to-day, which she seemed to enjoy, but she is still greatly depressed. I am sure I have need to study my Bible much, coming across so many various cases, but the more I see and hear, the more I feel it must be God's teaching alone that can help or comfort ; so many are made unhappy by man giving a wrong place to some of God's truths. This week I have a proposed district nurse to look after, and a Bible-woman's German people to visit, besides my usual duties. I long so sometimes to escape the noise of London. I feel as if I could walk twenty miles on the hottest day, did it take me to some lone mountain top."

In August Mrs. Ranyard went to Switzerland for six weeks, and Agnes took the whole charge of the mission during her absence, and on her

return Agnes wrote her the following letter as a sketch of her employments in the interval : —

“DEAREST MRS. RANYARD, — The events of the last six weeks, though interesting as they daily occurred, will not form any very important features in a review of the time. You left us August 13th, and on the 16th Herr Neuhaus called with an introduction from Mr. Moon. He was anxious to inquire into the Bible-women’s work, with a view of establishing something of the kind in Berlin. Two ladies called from the country to tell of the work of their Bible-women, but of the eight in Leicester and the one in the Isle of Man, you will read elsewhere. I have been at several mothers’ meetings. I held those at Victoria Docks weekly during Miss P’s absence. Drury Lane, Chislehurst, Grey’s Buildings, Whitecross Street, May Fair, Cow Cross, Dudley Street, Portman Market, York Road, Moor Lane, Coburg Row, Dove Row, and Stourbridge mothers’ meetings, I have either held or been present at. The question of their boundaries has obliged me to hold many meetings of the Bible-women, five and six at a time. Our numbers in Parker Street have mounted up to twenty-six, so I wrote to ask Mr. Alexander to send us some more beds, which he has kindly promised to do ; also sheets, blankets, etc. He was much pleased at what I mentioned to him of the manner in which the dormitory seems really to become the adopted home of the inmates, for not merely is it their abode during

their time of lodging there, but they return to it when they leave their situations ; they recommend friends to try it, and are sure to spend part of every holiday, if not the whole of it, there. They seem also to feel they have there a friend to advise and help them in their difficulties, and the Sunday afternoon class is attended by many of our former inmates. We have cases of those who were longing for spiritual instruction, as well as for respectable lodgings, being recommended to come to our matron ; one now in the house was on the verge of becoming a nun, to her the only conceivable way of finding the peace she longed for ; now her eyes seem to be opened to a better way, though she does not feel she has yet entered on it.

“ Mrs. S. (one of the Bible-women) has had Asiatic cholera, and for many hours her life was despaired of, but the grief of her poor people during the hours of danger and suffering has encouraged her to hope that, having won their love, she may be enabled to lead them to One who loves them far better than she can do. She has not quite shaken off the effects of her illness, and the deadly cold of her limbs will, the doctor fears, long continue, unless she be provided with warm under-clothing. I spent one most enjoyable afternoon with the Westminster Bible-woman. At two o'clock I went to the Coburg Row mothers' meeting, which is very small,—accounted for by most of the women being laundresses. A little

school has been opened in the same house for destitute children, who are entirely kept: four only as yet, as the funds are low; they seemed well behaved, and sang very nicely. Our boundary meeting followed, and I could not resist an urgent invitation for a 7 o'clock prayer-meeting; thus time was afforded for conversation. One told how she had had doubts whether she were called to the work, and had asked of the Lord a sign. She went to a house where the woman bade her go away, for they had more Bibles than they could read; however, Mrs. F. obtained permission to see the husband, who is a sincere Christian; he so enjoyed her reading and praying with him that on parting he said, 'I know God sent you here; your mission is from God.' So she went on her way rejoicing, knowing that the Lord had called her indeed. There seems such a nice spirit among these neighboring workers. They go to each other's prayer-meetings, and in every way work so hand in hand; it reminded me more of the deaconesses than anything I have seen, for there was the independence of individual separate action in their work, and yet union, because that work was for the one Master. I have visited Sarah Bird weekly, and much enjoy being with her. One day she was very weak and low, but said she 'did not fear death; she heard of it as a dark valley, but she only thought of it as lighted up by the presence of Him who promised to be with her.' "

The rest of this paper, which is very long, is taken up with accounts of special branches of the mission, interesting indeed, but too detailed to be inserted here. An account of the Bible-women's day at Walthamstow is, however, too graphic to be omitted :—

“Come with me to the bedside of the cripple of London Wall; and you will hear her earnest desire that to-morrow may be fine, that the Bible-women may enjoy their day in the country. And now that that day has come and gone, you, as well as she, may like to know something of it. In three different parts of London, at 10 o'clock on the morning of July 31st, there might have been seen large vans receiving their passengers. And did you inquire who were those neatly dressed, pleasant-looking women, you would have been answered, ‘These are the 160 Bible-women who are going to enjoy the yearly treat, to which they all look forward with pleasure.’ An hour or two later, and far away from the roar and din of the mighty city, you would find ten vans setting down that same party at the door of a country house in Essex. And then, by carriage or by omnibus, would come those to whom the Bible-women are very closely knit by ties which are felt but cannot be explained. Watch them a little, and see the meeting between the Bible-woman and her lady-superintendent, or listen to the tones of regret in which the one assigns a reason for the absence of the other, and you will feel how the pleasures

of the day are doubled by being shared. Now let us try to recall the scene — a contrast, indeed, to that left but a few hours before. Soft grass beneath the feet, and lovely flowers and trees around, and God's bright sky above, and the glorious sun shining as it only seems to shine in the country, and the air so pure and clear that you seem to realize in the gladness of your heart a fresh feeling of the goodness of Him of whom you can say, 'My Father made them all.' And if you join the scattered groups, you hear nothing discordant with the feelings of the moment ; but how He who made all these bright flowers and trees, those playful rabbits and fair children, is not God alone of the country but also of the town.

"The bell has rung ; let us follow the women into that large tent, and see how bounteous a provision has been made for their refreshment. Nor are the women there alone ; the ladies, as well as their host and hostess, are caring that each should be provided for according to her taste. Now they have sung a hymn and dispersed through the grounds ; we shall join some of them and hear some sad tales. O, if we were to tell of the night that one spent seeking a little girl who had left her home, what revelations were made to eye and ear of the wickedness, not only of men and women, but also of children ! But is not the day too lovely so to mar its brightness ? We would rather tell the other side. Here is one who speaks of the sick-bed she has lately left ; on it

lies a woman gasping for breath, the unnatural sharpening of the nose telling her end is near; beside her a little one, sick too, but sleeping now. She tells of such a revelation of Jesus' love to her, as vivid as a voice telling her He loved her. Once before, she heard that voice. Months ago she was outside her door; a pious neighbor heard her cough, and warned her that soon, perhaps, she would lie sick unto death, and then how would it be with her soul? She would not listen, but the words stuck to her. The neighbor came to pray with her, and one night the never-forgotten question was answered. She was rising from her bed to pray, and, as it were beside her, she heard a voice saying to her, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.' How gladly thenceforth she came to the mothers' meetings, from which she was never absent when it was possible to attend. Then listen to this death-bed scene: there is one in great bodily suffering, yet enjoying the peace which passeth all understanding. A week since, the Bible-woman left her, apparently careless; but with her sickness, the Spirit brought to her remembrance words heard long since in that now, to her, 'blessed mission-room.' You hear of infidels converted, by God's blessing, on the reading of his word brought to their doors by these women, and of scenes such as this: 'One day I opened a door to see, as I thought, a corpse on the bed before me; horror-struck, I closed it on that chamber of death, but felt, as it were, forced into the room

and down on my knees beside that bed. I prayed, and the eyes of the seeming corpse opened. "Who are you? Who sent you here with those words for me?" O, it was because Christ would have that soul with Him forever, for she was only spared to hear from Him, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." "

"Here is woman from a country district, and but a partial description can be given of one house she entered: five motherless children, with a bad father, left all but naked; a boy of fourteen with only a ragged pair of trousers, into one leg of which an arm was thrust; a girl but a year younger, and three other children in a similar plight; now clothed and cared for, they go to school, and the boy is in employment. Shall not these things come up in remembrance before the King of kings? All is not bright in the Bible-woman's path, however; many are her discouragements, but her work is with the Lord, and her reward with her God, even though she should be called to lie, as one now does, in all the agony of cholera, brought on by the malaria caused by the late great fire in her neighborhood. The pleasant day is near its close, and again all are gathered in the tent, and after tea addresses are given; a faithful word in season, urging them to search and see first that their own hearts are right with God, to examine whether they can tell to dying sinners of a Saviour *they* have found, and impressing on them the importance of themselves drinking

deeply of the well of life, searching their Bibles and holding communion with heaven, drawing thence each day's and hour's supplies, and so maintaining personal holiness, as by their life and conduct to be seen as living epistles, 'known and read of all men.' And then they separate, having had this word of God given them as their motto in the work to which, with new vigor, they hope to return, Col. iii. 23, 24."

Early in October, Agnes came home for a short visit, and most warmly was she welcomed by her poor people at Fahan, who had often asked reproachfully, "Had she forgotten them, and was she never coming back?"

This feeling, and the intense love she bore everything at Fahan, made this visit one of very mingled feelings to her. At first, the enjoyment of the pure country air, the mountain walks, and all the sights and sounds of home seemed perfect; but as, day after day, the time drew nearer for her departure, one could see the struggle in her mind, though there was no doubt as to where the path of duty lay. On her return, she spent a few days in Dublin, whence she wrote:—

"I must write a few lines, to tell you of my exceeding enjoyment in renewing old and valuable friendships. I paid Mr. Hare a visit in his study; a heavy cold had prevented him preaching, but he said a few words on 'Fellowship with Jesus.' This, he says, is not, as we fancy, a kind of ecstatic state; but, even if we have known this, it is

more real, perhaps, when, overwhelmed with care or sorrow, we find the promise fulfilled, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' On Sunday I went to Trinity Church again, where Mr. Gregg preached on the twenty-second anniversary of its opening. Afterwards I went to Lurgan Street Ragged School, where I was very kindly received, and found many changes and improvements, plenty of teachers and room ; but Lurgan Street has a fascination to me from old memories. I think I never enjoyed anything more than teaching there, eleven years ago."

Her mother and sister visited her in London, early in December, and found her looking thin and ill, and she confessed that she had been suffering from a wearying pain in the brow, and had consulted Dr. Kidd about it. His remedies gave her temporary relief, but it was evident she was not strong or well, and they urged on her very strongly that accompanying them to Italy would be the best cure. This seemed to her like abandoning her post, and she could not be persuaded to think of it. But her physician soon ordered a change of air, and she visited her friends at Highfield.

The rest and country quiet of her friend's lovely rectory had a marvelous effect, and a short visit sufficed to recruit her strength. She had felt much depriving Mrs. Ranyard of her help in that peculiarly busy month of December, and was anxious to return as soon as possible to her duties. They

were soon to be once more interrupted, and this time not to be again resumed. On New Year's Eve she received information of the severe illness of her sister at Rome, and she immediately started thither.

That personal courage was one of Agnes's characteristics will be doubted by none who have read the account of her journey from Cologne to Kaiserswerth in a snowstorm. On that occasion, to fulfill her promise of being present at the midnight service, she braved the perils of the way, and now she started alone on a far more distant journey, anxiety pressing on her heart, and fear darkening the future.

On Agnes's arrival in Rome, she found that her sister was out of danger, though still extremely weak ; but a cousin, who was one of the party, was in a very critical state with the same kind of fever. Agnes at once devoted herself to her, and her kind and judicious nursing is fondly remembered. The attendance was a trying one, involving watchful nights and anxious days ; air and exercise for an hour or two daily were essential, and Agnes used to return from her little expeditions with wonderful histories of the places she had visited, always making her way beyond the walls, and exploring ruins and tombs and temples with a courage and perseverance all her own. Finding that neither of the invalids were likely to regain strength quickly, Agnes at once determined to remain with her friends during their stay abroad,

and wrote to tell Mrs. Ranyard that she must give up all hope of resuming her London work. Truly she ever remembered that home duties came first, and only when the necessity for her presence was removed, did she turn again to more active labors. After some weeks in Naples, and a second short visit to Rome, the party proceeded to Florence, where Agnes met and had much pleasant intercourse with Rose and Francesco Madiari, the Kaiserswerth deaconesses then lately established in the town, and some good English Christians, to whom she had introductions. The great heat of an Italian May, however, relaxed her strength, which had seemed to be restored by the rest and change, and soon after arriving in Florence, she left the party to visit some of the deaconess institutions in Switzerland. A friend, who was on her way to Geneva, suggested that they should travel together, and they started about May 15th for the Italian lakes, whence they were to cross the Simplon. This friend wrote to a relative, "Agnes was the most agreeable and the most useful fellow-traveller I ever met; she knew or found out all that was necessary for travellers to know, and while others were discussing, she had all arranged."

At Villeneuve they parted, and Agnes's first visit was to St. Loup, a deaconess institution near Lausanne, of which she had heard much when at Kaiserswerth; Strasburg and Männedorf she also visited, and at the latter spent some days with

that remarkable woman Dorothea Trudel, of whose faith and prayer she ever spoke with the deepest admiration.

In July, Agnes rejoined her friends in Paris, and almost her first words to her mother were a request that she might devote herself entirely to nursing-work ; all that she had witnessed at these institutions having more deeply impressed upon her the conviction she had long felt, that her special talent was for laboring in hospitals. There were many to take up Bible work and other branches of Christian labor ; few who had physical strength, nerve, and inclination to devote themselves to the sick in hospital wards. Her mother could no longer resist her wish, and when they arrived in London, Agnes entered at once into correspondence with Miss Nightingale and Mrs. Wardroper, and it was arranged that in October she should enter St. Thomas's Hospital as a Nightingale probationer.

CHAPTER V.

HER HOSPITAL TRAINING.

“FAHAN, *Sunday Night, September 30th, 1862.*

“1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. All good-bys are said ; to-morrow I leave this loved home, and loved people. ‘Why do you go away?’ have many asked, and now I must answer that why, so that when I look back on this decided step, I may know somewhat of the position in which I stood when it was taken. How shall I look back years hence, if spared? Shall it be with regret or pleasure? I will not look forward, save with the earnest look at Him whose love, I trust, constraineth me, laying at his feet the secret longing of my heart, that in the great day of account He will blot out all my short-comings, and all my sins, and say of even poor weak me, ‘She hath done what she could.’

“For more than a year and a half has St. Thomas’s been a half pleasant, half dreaded thought, and in less than a week it will be to me a reality. What influence I may have there for good or evil, — what trials I may be exposed to, — all these have been already too much, perhaps, weighed and counted on. God knows what

may be. May He be very near, and may I cling more to Him in all. Perhaps it is well that I shall, at my first outset in hospital work, bear the name of 'Nightingale probationer,' for that honored name is associated with my first thought of hospital life. In the winter of '54, when I had those first earnest longings for work, and had for months so little to satisfy them, how I wished I were competent to join the Nightingale band when they started for the Crimea! I listened to the animadversions of many, but I almost worshipped her who braved all, and I felt she must succeed. In spring, 1853, we had been abroad; the visit to Paris deaconesses had left 'Kaiserswerth' a name of which I longed to know more. The day spent there deepened this feeling, and the after week of further acquaintance, with the disappointment that I was not allowed to remain there, instead of seeing Switzerland, made longings after Kaiserswerth training still deeper. For years I thought of it, but first mamma could not be left alone; then J. was my special charge, and in no way could it be. I was very happy in my home and in my work, only that I longed for greater power of usefulness, and sometimes thought of what I might be able to effect were I trained; I wished for nothing more than a more earnest, loving spirit in my work, and God's blessing on it. Then came September, 1860, when mamma proposed that I should rest my voice, and have entire change, by a visit to Kaiserswerth.

O, the doubts and fears ! but I went, trying only to think of all I might learn, and what greater usefulness I might become capable of. 'For a month only,' as I said to Pastor Fliedner, protesting that home and poor could not be longer left. Home news seemed to say that sole charge of both was doing J. good, and day after day I remained at Kaiserswerth. In my second month there, I had much watching of a poor dying man ; sitting alone by him in that little room, day after day, it went to my heart to hear some of his requests refused, and to see the food given him, so unfitted to his state. And I sat there and thought, 'If these be the trials of the sick in an institution conducted on Christian principles, O, how must it be in those institutions in our own land where no true charity is in the hearts of most of the heads or hands that work them !' and I then and there dedicated myself to do what I could for Ireland, in its workhouses, infirmaries, and hospitals. And so I remained at Kaiserswerth, trying almost to steel myself against the fearful accounts of sickness and death in Syria, and the appeals for helpers. But at last the thought came,—for a while you may be of use there, and yet return to Ireland ; and I wrote to mother for leave to go to Beyrout. I took that letter to the pastor : 'May I add, you will let me work with your sisters when there ?' He answered, 'If you wish to give your life and every energy to work for the sick, your own country calls you ; Miss Nightingale has just

written to ask me for a person to fill a position for which you could be easily fitted.' Next day came Mr. Rathbone's letter, saying that Uncle —— had advised him to ask me to prepare myself for the superintendence of Liverpool Training School for nurses for the poor, and would I go through a course of preparation for it? I found this suggestion and the pastor's were identical. Also came a letter from Mrs. Ranyard; since her eldest daughter's death, she so wanted me to come and be a friend and helper. Mamma also urged this; she would rather that should be my work, if I were not coming home; and to me, Bible work seemed the highest. Not so to Pastor Fliedner; 'Any one with an earnest Christian spirit could help there; in hospital work there must be a special faculty.' I never forgot those words. I came to London, saw Miss Nightingale, who plainly put before me the difficulties of the work, the trials of the training-time, kindly, lovingly, and so sympathizingly, and yet felt I could meet them. Then came the interview with Mr. Rathbone, and the feeling that I was far too young and inexperienced for anything of the kind. A year at St. Thomas's might give the mechanical skill in nursing, but the powers requisite for organizing, directing, superintending; whence were they to come? No, at the head I could not be, especially as I was told my religious feelings and views must be kept in the back-ground, till I was considered so invaluable an agent that such things

should be tolerated, as it were, for the sake of other things. What ! was I to be this giant champion ? I ! who had so little to commend me ! It seemed mockery, and yet I had not sought the position or the work. Perhaps in some other sphere there would be work for me. Then in Mrs. Ranyard's invitation appeared much that would suit to prepare me ; with her I could learn to superintend, learn what faculties I had in that way, and yet not in too responsible a position, so as to do harm by failing. It was not without regret I turned aside from 'nursing ;' and had I not felt partly pledged to Mrs. Ranyard, before I visited St. Thomas's, I should have returned to my original purpose that very June, 1861. And yet I do not regret that delay ; looking back, I feel I have been prepared by that work to meet many trials and difficulties which, with my previously limited experience of life, I could not have imagined. And that isolation which so tried me then, probably I shall have to meet again. There is no second home in the world, — no replacing of mother and sister. But I never forgot 'nursing,' and it often seemed I ought to return to it. When I was called to Rome, by S.'s bed, as before by Aunt L.'s, I felt as if I had somewhat of the nursing faculty ; but always the question came, 'Could I govern and teach others ?' I went to St. Loup, and learned lessons there ; lessons from imperfections. Reichen and Zurich taught me how God can make feeble women strong in such work, —

can teach even weak ones, who seem so clinging as to need support, to stand and give guidance and help to others. At Strasburg, with Sister Emilie as with Sister Trina, I discussed the difficulties of a superintendent, and many of Sister Sophie's words came to memory from a new point of view, and so less tremblingly I came to consider the question, 'How could I help?' and I determined at least to try, to come to St. Thomas's Hospital, and to see whether, in so great a work as that of training true-hearted, God-fearing nurses, there were not some niche for me. If every one shrinks back because incompetent, who will ever do anything? 'Lord, here am I, send me.'

"And as to this dread of associates let me, more and more, remember Mr. Rathbone's word: 'Are you more above those with whom you will have to mix than our Saviour was in every thought and in sensitive refinement?' What am I, to meet and combat evil? I, so weak, so needing to be led and influenced aright? If I am in the way, as I trust I am, in which God would have me be, will He not care for that? May God go with me and help me."

She fully realized all she was entering upon, when she left her lovely country home and immured herself for twelve months in a hospital in London. For the history of the time she spent there we have no journal, and only three or four letters to refer to. The first letter describes her arrival: —

“ We reached London at 6.30, and I was fortunate about my luggage, so got off at once. I desired the cabman to drive to Surrey Gardens, and we drove on long through well-known streets, but when we passed the Obelisk, I came to new ground. However, not long after, we stopped, and I saw a great gateway, over which was in large letters, ‘ St. Thomas’s Hospital ;’ so a bell was rung, and I said ‘ Nightingale nurse ;’ the gate opened and we drove on a little way and then saw a long, half-covered way leading to a large, well-lighted room. Up to this I walked ; saw porter No. 2, and was admitted into a large warm hall, well paneled and partitioned, as all the house is, with well-planed deal, varnished its own color, which looks so clean and light. I had a long wait while the cabman brought in the luggage, and then was conducted past the doors of some wards, in which I saw a few patients in bed, and two nurses seated most comfortably at work at a table in the middle of the room ; then we crossed a large space with trees, giving, as did all I saw, the idea and feeling of being far from any town ; and though I have not yet been out, there is the perfect stillness of the country. But to go on and introduce you as I was. The porter led me into a kind of small hall, and instantly two nice-looking, almost deaconess-looking nurses came forward and received me most kindly, saying Mrs. Wardroper (the lady-superintendent) had been in several times during the afternoon and evening, and had just left, hav-

ing given me up for that day. However, nothing could exceed the kindness of these nurses ; their dress a kind of gray stuff, very neat, white aprons and caps, rather too round and coquettish I thought for sisters, but a neat, pretty style of dress, which will, I am sure, be most becoming to Nurse Agnes.

“They brought me into a large, lofty, comfortable room, with tables, chairs, flowers, pictures, books, carpet, rug, fire, gas, like any sitting-room ; off this, surrounded by the varnished boards, are the little bedroom cells ; their wooden walls about ten feet high, not half-way to the ceiling, with a bed, small chest of drawers, wash-stand, chair, and towel-rail. The room was formerly a refreshment room, and is a very handsome and lofty one, lighted from the roof, and now surrounded by the nurses’ cells, with the open space in the middle for their sitting-room, where I am now writing at one of the numerous little tables, with bright flowers and numbers of all kinds of magazines around me. Two things cheered me much to see : first, on entering the sitting-room, a picture of Kaiserswerth ; secondly, in the bedroom, a large Bible on the drawers beside the looking-glass. I was taken to my room, provided with hot water, and after a little, called to tea, comfortably prepared in the nice, light eating-room, quite separate from, but near our sitting-room.

“There is a temporary church fitted up in the house, which all attend ; but every second Sunday

I shall have the whole afternoon to myself to go where I like. There are fourteen Nightingale nurses, besides sisters, and about 280 patients, when the house is full, which it is not yet, as this place was only opened a few days ago. I went to bed soon after tea, and was up for breakfast this morning at 6.30. Everything is so quiet that you more feel than know that others are moving around you. My nurse friend summoned me to breakfast where I had tea last night, and I found the whole party assembled ; a nice, respectable-looking set ; all amiable-looking, some pretty ; the sister sat at the head of the table. Bread and butter and toast in plenty, and each person with her own tea-pot and sugar-bowl, which they wash and keep in their own rooms. Each cell has its own gas, and there is some general light which seems to burn all night, for I never woke but I saw it ; I could read a large print Bible in bed by it. It seems to me as if, with God's blessing, I may have great means of usefulness here, both with nurses and patients, for one seems to have much freedom. God grant me the best influence, but He must keep my own soul very close to Himself. And now, darlings, do not fret yourselves about me ; there seems to be every provision for comfort, and all I have yet seen or heard has given me a pleasant impression, and I feel at home already."

"Christmas, 1862.

"We have got our hospital *trousseau*, and are so busy every spare moment. I must finish my bonnet for to-morrow, and my jacket for Christmas Day, so shall have scarcely a moment. I have given out my dresses to be made, so am better off than most. We are obliged to go to church in hospital costume, but in our daily walks may dress as we like. . . . I often think how you would laugh if you could take a peep at me, for instance, when I am giving medicine to forty-two men ; one amuses me — he opens his mouth for me to pop in a pill, and stops to thank me before he swallows it."

Agnes had begun a Bible-class soon after her arrival at the hospital, for the other Nightingale nurses, with Mrs. Wardroper's permission ; it was a great interest to her, and she had reason to believe it was blessed to the souls of several of its members. A day or two after leaving the hospital, she thus alludes to it in a letter : —

"I had a most painful and yet gratifying parting, many tears on all sides, and even from some of whom I did not expect it. I believe all were sincerely sorry, but best of all was the general testimony to how much they should miss the Bible-class ; it was such a help, how could they do without it ? How good God has been to me ! The year has flown, and has been such a happy one."

"St. Thomas's, April 24th, 1863.

"MY DEAREST AUNT,— One of our nurses is

ill, and I have a little extra duty, which I am glad of, as it is real practice ; but one half-hour less time, one runs after all day and never overtakes. I come up to read prayers, too, now, which I am glad to do, as I can make more hear than the other nurse can. I am now the oldest probationer here, and from this, and also having gradually crept on to it, they all look to me for little helps — now to correct spelling, now to show them how to keep their books, and other information, and sometimes for advice and sympathy. Then my Bible-class needs much careful preparation, so that all my time down-stairs is too much occupied for letters ; and in the wards, as sure as one sits down, the cry of ‘ Nurse ’ calls you from your book, or paper, or thoughts. I have had two pleasant letters from probationers who have felt grateful for my kindness, and all who have attended it have so thanked me for the Bible-class ; indeed, it has been a most bright spot to me, and such an interest during the week preparing for it and holding it, that not only personally has it been a great delight, but God has given me also to know that it has been more or less useful to four, and decidedly blessed to one. When I feel how far short I am of what I ought to be, I fear to mar what God has begun ; I do not think He will allow real harm to be done, but one may hinder, raise difficulties and doubts in the minds of those beginning the race, when they see persons they fancy advanced in the Christian course so weak and inconsistent as I am.”

As the year at St. Thomas's Hospital drew to a close, an opening for further work presented itself to her ; she heard of a Kaiserswerth deaconess being at the deaconess institution in Burton Crescent, and went to call on her, thinking it might be one she had known during her visit to Germany. She found that she had come over to assist the English sisters in adding the care of a hospital to their other occupations, but that she was on the point of returning home, and the heads of the institution in Burton Crescent were seeking some one to replace her. A few days later the chaplain called at St. Thomas's Hospital, and asked Agnes if she would come and help them ; this, after some deliberation, she agreed to do. After a very short visit at home during the month of October, she returned to London and commenced her duties as superintendent of the small hospital in Bolsover Street. Later, the Great Northern Hospital was substituted for this one. During her stay there she kept no journal, and a few letters are the only record of this period.

" November 9th.

" MY DEAREST AUNT, — I think everything promises well except that I shall have little to do at first, but, perhaps, it will be easier to do that little well, if I am not tempted to idle over it. Everything is so new to me ; the contrast between rich and poor hospitals is indescribable. I am learning my own defects, but hope to be able to correct

these, partly by my own endeavors, and partly by circumstances ; however, I certainly am fortunate in beginning on a small scale, inefficient as I am, and I feel as if I had been brought here."

The next letter seems to have been written after the large sphere of work on which she next entered had been proposed to her and accepted, and this letter is the last from London, though she remained there for some months afterwards.

"GREAT NORTHERN HOSPITAL, *March 12, 1864.*

"DEAREST AUNT E., — You will think it strange I have not written sooner; but I can scarcely find time for all the letters which must go about this Liverpool business, of which I can scarcely think. I can only *feel* about it. I could not refuse ; it seemed so decided for me, all doubt removed, so that my only real excuse was my utter incapacity. Now, I can only think of the whole in connection with Jeremiah i., and feel that the same unchangeable God and ever living Jesus must speak so to me, as I believe I only seek to obey his call. From no one point can I see any fitness in myself ; I can only say it is God's work, and He must do it. He can work by my inefficiency for success or failure, whichever He intends as the result. My patients keep me very busy, but I am glad of the work, though I should be glad to think more. However, the thought is as yet so overwhelming I can only meet it in the one way — the way was plain ; I neither

sought nor could I refuse the call. Mrs. Wardroper paid me a long, kind visit on Thursday ; it is so pleasant, she is going to give me some of my fellow-probationers ; and does it not indeed seem, as I can see all my life long, that God has guided every step ? May one follow the other in his own order, on which looking back I can see the plan and design. The very probationers I attached to myself, and whom I believe God led more or less to Himself by my Bible-class at St. Thomas's, are those Mrs. Wardroper offers me. Ought I not to trust for the future, when the present is so lightened by the kindness of friends ? My poor little boy of seven, whose leg was amputated on Wednesday, requires much care, day and night, though he is doing beautifully ; another operation case, and ten more or less anxious medical ones ; but what are these to the proposed six hundred or a thousand patients ? O ! I trust my friends will pray much for me, that my heart and my life may be more and more wholly his, who has now called me. I wish you would ask dearest Miss M., Mr. H.—M., and A. S. to ask God to prepare my heart for this all-important post of such extended influence for good or evil, and that He will make me more realize that He is my Saviour and I his child, for whom He has promised help and strength. If my own heart were only strong in Him, I should not fear ; what I am afraid of is the beginning at the wrong end with, — ‘ Here am I, send me,’ before He has sent live coal to touch my lips.”

The last few months at the Great Northern Hospital tried her much, physically and mentally ; for the first time she had the burden of responsibility, which, to her sensitive and conscientious spirit, was no light one ; the number of patients under her charge was small, but the assistants she had were without experience in sick nursing, and on her, consequently, devolved much of the care and attendance. One peculiarly critical case she could trust no one to watch but herself, and for six weeks was seldom absent from the patient, night or day ; this, with the heat of the weather, soon told on her health ; she became pale and thin, and a slight deafness, from which she first suffered while at Kaiserswerth, increased to such a degree that she consulted Miss Nightingale as to whether it should not be a sufficient reason for her at once declining the great work in Liverpool, which was at this time offered to her. Miss Nightingale advised her to have an aurist's opinion as to the cause of the deafness, and Mr. Tonybee, who was consulted, declared it to arise entirely from nervous debility, caused by overwork. He prescribed immediate and perfect rest ; but it was not possible for her to give up the hospital, of which she had undertaken the charge, until a successor had been found, and the long delay in finding a suitable person kept her in London until the middle of August. When she arrived at Fahan, her friends were frightened at her state of prostration, physical and mental. Instead of

hastening, the morning after her arrival, to visit her favorite spots, to gather flowers in the garden, and luxuriate in the lovely scenes around, she seemed only able to lie on the sofa, and listen to conversation, though even this her deafness prevented her fully enjoying. A week passed, and as rest and country air seemed insufficient to restore her, her mother proposed taking her to Port Ballintra, a quiet little village near the Giant's Causeway, where the Atlantic breezes might brace her nerves, and sea-bathing restore her wonted energy. This plan proved successful, and in a few weeks we returned home, feeling that she was her old self again, though the deafness continued most trying to her. She remained all winter, and early in spring left for Liverpool, where a sphere of labor had been opened to her, which must be described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE LIVERPOOL WORKHOUSE.

PUBLIC attention was called a few years ago to the sad condition of English workhouse paupers. But before the wide-spread interest had been awakened in the public mind, one actively benevolent individual, whose large heart seems to take in every need, and at once to suggest and work out a remedy, took thought of the sick-poor in workhouse hospitals, and inquired into their condition. In the Liverpool workhouse hospital, things were better managed than in many similar institutions ; an active governor and efficient committee prevented any wholesale starvation or cruelty, but no general inspection can secure against individual oppression where the old system of pauper nursing prevails. Mr. W. Rathbone proposed at once to substitute for the ignorant, and worse than useless women, trained paid nurses, and nobly undertook to bear all the expense connected with the experiment for three years, by which time he believed the success of the scheme would have recommended it to the Board of Guardians, and it would be adopted as the permanent system.

As soon as he obtained the consent of the committee, he wrote to Miss Jones, who was then, in the spring of 1864, at the Great Northern Hospital, asking her to undertake the post of lady superintendent of the proposed trained nurses. After much correspondence with Miss Nightingale and Mrs. Wardroper on the subject, she agreed to this proposal. The plan could not, however, be commenced for several months; many alterations were necessary to secure proper accommodation for the staff, and the nurses themselves had to be found. Miss Nightingale, who entered most warmly into the project, arranged that twelve of the Nightingale nurses trained at St. Thomas's Hospital should be sent to Liverpool, but the education of some was not complete, and others were in various positions from which they could not be recalled without some months' notice. Besides, Agnes was quite unable to enter on any work without a long rest, and Mr. Tonybee had given it as his opinion, that unless she had immediate and entire rest for some months, her deafness would become incurable. The experiment was, therefore, to be postponed until the spring of 1865, but in the preceding August, Agnes was requested to go to Liverpool to meet the committee, and give her opinion on various debated points relative to the arrangements to be made for her staff. She wrote to her aunt, "As to home, it seems as if I had so much to do first, I cannot realize it as near; and if the questions

brought up for consideration in Liverpool are very important, I must return at once to London to see Miss Nightingale and Mrs. Wardroper. It is very formidable this going alone, but I cannot try to meet any part of the work in my own strength. The more I think and know of it, the more I feel my own incapacity. And now all who love me must pray that I may have wisdom given me for it."

After the lonely journey from London, Liverpool is reached at last, and she drives from the station to the workhouse ; the large black gates are opened, but the porters hesitate to admit her ; the name and business must be reported at the gate, and then a man is sent to conduct her to the governor's house ; after a long business interview, he takes her to her rooms, the same she is eventually to occupy, — ground-floor rooms, looking out on a small court and low wall ; beyond this, the fever hospital. Within, all is dingy enough : horsehair sofa and chairs, tables and stool, no ornament of any kind, while the dark color of walls and wainscoting gives a look of gloom to the whole ; yet Agnes's heart is undaunted, and she goes with the governor to visit the proposed nurses' rooms and some of the wards. Of these latter she says, " The beds are rather close together and the wards low, but all appeared fairly ventilated. There seemed care for the patients, too ; a few plants and flowers, ' Illustrated News ' pictures on the walls, and a ' Silent Com-

forter' in each ward ; not the utterly desolate look one often meets in such places."

That night, as she sat alone in those dreary rooms, she could write, "I feel at this moment completely at home here, and the nervous fear I had in looking forward to all, seems to have left me. 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'" Next day she writes, "I went to bed very happy, and with a kind of feeling that I had indeed adopted the work ; whatever doubts I might have had before, seeing the place has made me feel I shall love it, and be of use, I trust, if God blesses and helps me, to some of those poor lonely ones. I have to thank God for present help, and so little nervousness or timidity ; I must ask Him to be with me hourly, enabling me to undertake all and to meet all, as for Him and in his sight."

A sleepless night and severe headache left her somewhat less brave in the morning, and a long delay in the arrival of the committee did not tend to brace her nerves. "I was awaiting them when Mrs. Cropper, Sen., and Mrs. J. Brougham came in, bringing a basket of lovely flowers all arranged in a glass, and only needing water ; it gave such a homelike look to my room, and the kind thoughtfulness of the gift made me feel again the good hand of my God upon me. They soon left, and I had a long time to wait, so I sat down to read ; the Bible alone could have engrossed my mind, so ready to dwell on the nervous dread of the next hour."

The ordeal was passed, and no small weight removed from her mind by getting the first interview over. She remained two days longer, so as to become perfectly acquainted with the proposed arrangements and suggest a few alterations. One passage more, in the very detailed entry in her journal kept during this week, must be given, lest any should imagine that she was fascinated by the greatness of the undertaking, and overlooked its trials :—

“Mr. Cropper hoped to-day that all did not seem too *couleur de rose*. Does it? Have I not again and again asked myself, Shall I ever be able to meet the dreariness, the loneliness, the difficulties, jealousies, restraint, disappointments, isolation? In my own strength, no, never. And yet when I look back, I see how God has helped me, how in the darkest moment a something has come, sent by that loving Father—a little word, a letter, flowers, a something which has cheered me, and told not only of the human love, but of that watchful heavenly Friend who knew his weak child's need, and answered her repining or fearing thought by a message of mercy which bade her trust and not be afraid. He can and He will, I do not say, give success, that may not be his way; but if all fail to human eyes, if I do nothing, He will look with pity on his child, and say, ‘She has done what she could.’ May no fear of man hinder me in his work, but may He so give wisdom and prudence as to keep me in the middle

path in 'his causeway,' with a single eye to his glory, and then I shall not turn aside to the right or to the left. I have many things to think of and plan. I fear the nurses having too much leisure ; I know they cannot rightly employ it, as a rule. Perhaps, with uneducated minds, too little is worse than too much work : responsibility, too, weighs less on them. I am so glad I have been in the house ; in everything I can now more realize my future position and its difficulties. But I have, as never before, a consciousness of power to bring sunshine to those poor creatures, as if I could, with God's blessing, make a little ray of hope and comfort sometimes enter their sad hearts."

Eight months later she returned to Liverpool, to enter on her new sphere of labor. The trial of this last separation was much increased by her mother's health being less strong than formerly, and from her journals it can be seen that Agnes had much debating with herself as to the duty of remaining at home, and renouncing hospital work. After much prayer for guidance, and calm weighing of the subject, she decided on pursuing the course she had entered upon, and in which already she had been made the instrument of so much blessing.

In order to brighten up her rooms, and give a homelike comfort and elegance to them, her new friends filled them with various articles of furniture, which acquired more and more value in her eyes as her personal feeling of regard and

friendship for the generous donors increased with longer acquaintance. At first she was almost overwhelmed by such unexpected, and, as she thought, undeserved gifts. In writing of them, she says: "I felt half inclined to cry when Mr. Rathbone enumerated the presents, all so handsome and useful. I was so humbled I could have sunk into the earth. I suppose the feeling is partly pride, the extreme dislike and sensitiveness I have to any obligation; but all this makes me feel as if people expected so much of me, this repaying beforehand of what I am expected to be and to do, and to which I may never attain. Supposing, what is quite possible, I turn out incapable of conducting the scheme, and have to be replaced, not for any fault, but merely for want of the necessary governing and organizing power; I shall feel like the originator of the South Sea bubble, for allowing people to be deluded by false expectations. I should equally dislike any future testimonial, but I could bear it more patiently had I been at work and done something. When anything goes wrong, I shall look round on my furniture, as if each thing were an accusing ghost."

No materials exist, either in letters or memoranda, which will enable us to give a history of the work which Agnes attempted and accomplished in the Liverpool workhouse. Her life there was too busy a one to allow time for much writing, and her home-letters dwelt on the little details which she knew would interest her friends,

but give no idea of the greatness of her undertaking, or her plan of operation.

“I now spend about three hours daily,” she writes, about this time “going my rounds of the wards, which does not give long to each ; and as I have not yet assumed the reins, I cannot do anything, not even sit down to read to a patient, but I get a few words to most, and I think already many look for me. There is so much that is very sad, which one realizes more when inactive in the way of remedy ; but, I hope, we shall be able to lessen many evils in time ; slowly and gradually it must be. I hear few complaints, and I have very few requests, these chiefly for paper and stamps to write to friends, and I receive many respectful nods from my countrymen. There is one very large ward entirely Roman Catholic, and on my first visit, I had so many questions to answer, ‘Are you a Catholic?’ etc., etc., as no other visitors are admitted. I see many, in various directions, reading their Bibles, and have met several who seem indeed to rejoice in them. One dear, bright little child especially, who is one mass of sores, always looks so happy, and his large eyes dance with delight as he repeats hymns, etc. He speaks so imperfectly that I cannot ask him much ; indeed, my deafness makes me lose a good deal. There are many poor blacks here ; one has died since I came ; severe colds are so fatal to them. One man from Manilla is dying, and only one of the patients can understand

his language. There are many idiots and old people in their dotage ; one keeps a birch rod under his pillow, which he daily presents to me, with a long speech ; others cry, if spoken to kindly. I feel daily more and more glad of the work in prospect ; it is such a field of usefulness, if God only bless us in it, and I feel sure He will do so. Few have had such a very happy life as I have, and it is happier every year. Now mother's health is an anxiety, but I try to feel the *keeping*, both for her and me, while we are absent from each other ; and yet it is such a blessing to feel I have such a loving mother, even far away."

"*April 18th, 1865.* — To-day in one ward lay a poor black man ; the dews of death were on his face, and his poor, parched lips and gasping breath told the same tale. O ! how I longed to go and nurse him. I was able to say a few words to him of Jesus. He said he was so weak, but I told how Jesus could tell the secret of the heart, and accept the weakest longing. O ! the loneliness of these sick-beds. O ! the many, many wants. How we shall need strength and hope and faith in God ! Then the thought which every one repeats, that ' Nobody ever comes into a place like this but by their own fault,' meaning idleness or sin. A hospital is sad enough, but a workhouse ! It almost seems as if over so many of those beds, ' No hope ' must be written, with reference to this world. Friendless, hopeless. If in this life only ye

have hope, ye are of all men most miserable. How we shall need the love of Christ to constrain us in our work, to be as He would have us be with those poor sufferers, not as man would have us! To-day I was only in the medical wards. A Frenchman who does not speak English, much enjoyed a talk. He so brightened up and made me such a French salute as I moved on. I gave him paper for writing, and he seemed quite joyous with the thought of the answer. An Italian was much cheered by my telling him I knew Naples well. O! if God gives me power to bring a little brightness to some, what a blessing it will be! I had some talk with a man who seemed to feel his need of Jesus, and yet was confused about the way. I gave him two thoughts, 'Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,' and 'Jesus died for me.' I was rather horror-struck to hear that a policeman goes every night through the wards to keep order. The feeling remained of the class of insubordinates one would have to control. How earnestly I desire they may be the better of our coming here! Six hundred patients dependent for comfort on me and my staff! 'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills.' 'Our eyes wait upon thee, O Lord.'"

While awaiting the arrival of her corps of trained nurses, she writes to a friend: "I do not feel the time lost. I feel quite at home here now, and am pretty much so in the wards, though not able to do anything, not being in office yet. It

is more trying work, however, than if I felt something were doing. I see so much that needs a remedy, and can only sometimes give a little hint how to make a sufferer easier, or do it myself. But the scenes of various kinds, and the many deaths, are very sad, and I feel very much the absolute prohibition to say a word to the Romanists. My question about the separate wards for Protestants and Roman Catholics has been decided for me. One of the guardians, whom I asked, thought it would involve endless difficulties. Thank you so much for wishing to help me in it. I look often to you ; on many points it seems as if I could ask no one else, and your letters always help me so much, if only by their sympathy. It often seems strange that I, who have so little self-reliance, and would like every step directed, am obliged to take such an independent position ; and yet I have been so led on that I could not help it, and I only trust I may be more and more led to look to the guidance of the Ever-present and All-wise heavenly Friend. But perhaps to no one are letters such a boon. So cut off from personal intercourse with my dearest friends, I cling to their letters, and often a letter has been God's messenger to bring me brightness when all seemed dark and trying. I have so often to thank Him for letters coming just when needed. To any one here I must be very reserved about my work and difficulties, even had I any one who could enter into the work heartily so as to understand, but a

great deal of mischief might be done by repeating what I said.

“ I did not sit down to write about self, however, but about Deaconess work. I feel more and more anxious that you and dear Mr. Pennefather should see an opening for your having some training-school for Christian women of all ranks. Many circumstances make me increasingly feel the necessity of some such institution. I believe there are many women of all ages longing for work, who cannot, from position or character, seek it for themselves. Many need guidance and direction : all want training and help. I have learnt two things which make me most anxious about this. Learning from real workers helps one very much, but not before one knows the work. When you have tried and felt your weak points, and when you are working and daily meet difficulties, then a few words with some sympathizing worker are a great help, and sometimes throw a new light on the whole subject. Many want their powers drawn out ; they feel a power they fear to try, and require advice and direction.

“ But there is another and a very strong point — the shrinking many have from coming forward even in good works. I think this needs to be carefully dealt with, there is such mischief in any combating it. I believe that feeling is a great safeguard, if only kept in its place. Association of workers will help to do this, and so will working under direction ; but, as I know painfully, no

one can tell what a woman exposes herself to, who acts independently. I never would advise any one to do as I have done, and yet I can feel I have been led on step by step, almost unwillingly, certainly not as I should have chosen, had I not seemed guided, and I believe have been, and so kept. But there is much one shrinks from, and while often much to humble, yet a great deal to puff up, much to which a member of a body would not be exposed. When one seeks training in other than a Christian home, there is in public institutions so much to keep back, and so little to foster spiritual growth. To learn to work in any way, one must now in England go where there is no teaching, no help outwardly ; cut off from every human teacher and friend, and the want of every refinement in surroundings, and of every source of knowledge of even the good going on in the world around. All this makes one's own world so narrow, that, in spite of deep interest in the work, there are times when one either feels alone, or as if very self-denying. It makes a cause for trial which takes another form in a community, but is not the same. The temptations in communities are to jealousy and envy, and yet perhaps one more feels both one's own power and what one lacks, than in independent work ; but I do not think there is the same daily and hourly difficulty about what is one's duty and work, which many shrink from and meet by doing nothing. Those who persevere learn in the school of mis-

takes, — an invaluable school, but slow training. All these things you know far better than I ; but as I daily and hourly feel them, I long for a more ‘royal road’ for many ardent and weak ones, many who for years, perhaps, are kept back from doing anything ; many who die without ever going beyond the wish to do something.

“ I know parents whose young people want work for God, who would gladly send them somewhere for a time to be trained ; I know grown-up women, not far advanced in Christian life, who would like to do a little under direction ; and I know some who have gone, almost against their principles, into sisterhoods, because they cannot get what they want elsewhere. Surely all these want help. I always so feel you could give it, if the way were opened. I do not know what you think of deaconesses. I think the reality might be had without the dress or name. The difficulty is the real submission of will there must be. I believe this is *the* valuable part of the training. It is hard to get it, but I believe it could be given to a really superior head : this makes it so needful that the character of that head should be in every way above those governed. I believe all I owe to Kaiserswerth was comprised in the lesson of unquestioning obedience. I tried to do everything I was desired, no matter how impossible it seemed, and found often less difficulty than I anticipated ; or if I did not succeed, the pastor’s lesson on the failure, its cause, etc., was most valuable. I am

sure I should never have obeyed this call, if I had not begun at Kaiserswerth ; and so I believe many characters might be moulded in many ways ; not, perhaps, for years of work under your institution, but for work in their various homes and neighborhoods. My idea, as you ask it, is not to begin with a sisterhood, but a home for ladies, who must submit to certain rules and government.

“ I used to think people could work on forever ; now I am sure a certain amount of quiet and recreation is needed, and makes one work better, with less strain. I think, with very slight variation, your present system would suit ; and then, if after a time any wished to devote themselves more entirely, the question of deaconesses would arise. In your large parish you could have a great variety of work ; more distinct nursing, or other training, would come later. My idea of beginning is more the work any lady might have in her own neighborhood, on her return home after a time with you. I deeply feel how few get training for that work which, of all work, needs it. I often think of Dorothea Trudel's last prayer for and with me, ‘that I might be a polished stone, fit for the Master's use.’ He must polish and use us, but I believe He uses means of fitting, and wills us to use them as given. How many unhewn stones there are which seem to need but a little fashioning, and shall we offer to Him that which costs us nothing ? It is such an

honor to be used by Him, — should we not seek it, not to add to our own crown, but his ?”

And now, at last, all was ready, and the day arrived on which the nurses were expected. An anxious one it must have been to her, and not without its special trials. The party of nurses arrived from London a few hours later, twelve Nightingale nurses and seven probationers. The next afternoon the work began in earnest. One of the great difficulties of the first year arose from the character of the ex-pauper women who were brought into the hospital from the other departments of the workhouse, to be trained under the nurses. Rough, coarse women they were, and apparently incapable of receiving instruction ; besides, their habits of intemperance led them astray whenever the slightest liberty was allowed ; so at last, after some months of uphill work and continual disappointment, the plan had to be given up. On the 22d May, Agnes wrote home :—

“ We are getting on delightfully so far, and I am very well, and scarcely tired, though I have had and have heavy head and leg work, which will, however, get lighter every day. I have no time for letters or for reading, — just one verse at night. That on Friday, our first day, was so appropriate (Nehemiah ix. 21), ‘ Yea, forty years did thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing ; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.’ I was at the moment wondering how well my poor feet felt after about fifty

ascents of seventy stairs, which I had had in the hours of placing my staff; each set to be put separately into their charge, and I had to run up and down with each. I arranged for them to come up in parties; but brainless people make such stupid mistakes, I found in the end I had to come down myself. The whole thing seems now really manageable to what I expected. Clouds are rising, but as 'hitherto' the Lord will help."

"*June 5th.* — I had a very pleasant Bible-class yesterday afternoon for my nurses, delightful to me, if not to them. To-day I had a visit from a Roman Catholic lady, who was very cordial; she said she so rejoiced in our work, and wished us every blessing. She is a lady visitor here, I find."

"*June 22d.* — I sent half my party to-day to New Brighton — the invalids and night nurses; they enjoy it much, and it does them all good. The submission of the patients now is most amusing. If I give a lecture in a ward for disorder of any kind, I soon get a message they are 'so sorry they upset the Lady Superintendent;' and with medicines, dressings, etc., they may rebel, but if 'the Lady says so,' they submit at once. I have not to be summoned so often as before; the threat is enough; and yet patients, as well as nurses, feel they can have redress of any grievance by an appeal to me. I had such a grateful message from the poor infirm, for getting them good bread. I am so sorry to be able to do so little, but they are surprised at my being early and late among them."

Her day was, indeed, no idle one. At 5.30 A.M. she went in her dressing-gown to unlock the doors for the kitchen-women. At 6 she rang the bell for the nurses and probationers ; at 6.30 all assembled for prayers in the nurses' sitting-room. At 7 the breakfast began. Often she made a round of the wards at 6 ; and if there was any anxious case, she would be up two or three times in the night. After "a race round the wards to see that all the breakfasts are correct," she came to her own at the head of the table, where nurses, probationers, assistants, and scourers were seated. At 7.30 she gave the orders for the day, and then made another round of the wards. Then giving out stores occupied her till the first dinner began at 12. She was always present herself, carved for the nurses and probationers, and dined with them. When her friends wrote to remonstrate with her for not having rest and quiet even at her meals, she answered that the moral influence of her presence in such a mixed community, she considered not the least important part of her day's work. Besides, she felt there was much for the superior nurses to bear, on first coming to a workhouse hospital, where the class of patients was much lower than those they had been accustomed to ; and she wished, wherever it was possible, by sharing their labors and identifying herself with their life, to help them through the trials and difficulties of their new position. Occasional visits to individual patients, giving out stores, and attending to

calls innumerable, occupied the afternoon. After presiding at tea at 4, she returned to the wards, to see how the dressing was done. And here her practical knowledge of nursing work enabled her to direct the nurses and teach the probationers, and gave her weight with both, which was invaluable to her authority. At 9 o'clock the night nurses went on duty, and she visited the wards to see that each was at her post. Prayers were at 9.30, after which the day nurses went to bed ; but another round of the wards was still before Agnes, and it was generally after 11, before she could go to her own room, and feel she might lie down to rest with her work for the day done.

There was a great deal of illness among her nurses during the first year, fever and small-pox ; and the anxiety about these cases pressed often painfully upon her. The responsibility, too, attached to so vast an undertaking, at times weighed down her spirits : the depressing influence of a workhouse in its outward, and still more in its moral aspect ; the isolation from friends and relatives, and all the pleasures and comforts of social life ; and, besides all this, difficulties in the work itself, and opposition and trial from some who might have been expected to uphold her authority and strengthen her hands. It is wonderful to see how brightly, as a rule, she looks upon the work ; at times, indeed, we find expressions in journal and letter indicating extreme depression ; but this was as much physical as mental ; and as they

occur more frequently in the third year of her labors in Liverpool, we may well believe that they may be generally, if not always, traced to over-fatigue of mind and body.

In the end of October, 1865, her mother and sister spent a few days in Liverpool, on their return from the Continent. As they drove through the gloomy gates and up the narrow road between high walls which led to her apartments, the contrast to her sweet country home, with its lovely scenes and pure mountain breezes, and all that had been such a delight to her, struck them painfully ; but once in her rooms, where she greeted them with a face more radiant than ever, it was impossible to look at her and pity her. She was the picture of happiness, and evidently delighted in her work, finding pleasure in every proof, however small, that through her or her staff, more of physical, as well as moral and spiritual good, had been brought to those under her care.

Early in the summer she began Sunday evening readings in one of the wards where there were none but Protestants. She could not be ignorant that Roman Catholics did attend ; but as they came uninvited, she did not consider herself called upon to exclude them. This class she continued to the end. Her sister describes one of these meetings as follows : “ We came into the ward where about twenty patients were in bed, a few minutes before the appointed hour. Agnes passed at once to her seat at the top of the room,

and sat quietly reading her Bible until the clock struck. In the mean time the room had filled ; on each bed men were seated closely packed together, others standing by the wall or grouped around, and there they stood in almost painful silence until the end. I never saw more attentive listeners. She began with a short prayer ; then read part of a chapter, on which she commented in very simple but striking words, closing with a practical application and earnest personal appeal to the hearts of all present. After reading a hymn, she again prayed, and so ended the class. As we left the room, the respectful demeanor of the men struck me very much ; and during the reading I saw one or two, who came in late, had taken off their shoes lest they should disturb her." She had also every Sunday a Bible-class for her nurses ; the notes of her preparation for both these show great care and thought. Nov. 10th she writes : — " We are feeling the approach of winter, for our wards are filling fast. On Wednesday I went out to Dingle Bank at 5, and drove in with the Croppers to Mr. Birrell's lecture, where I met my nurses and returned with them. We had a beautiful sermon on the fruits of the Spirit, and last night Mr. Lockhart's address was most helpful, on being 'rooted in Christ.' I do not know when I so enjoyed two lectures ; sent, I am sure, to make up to me for my Sunday, which seemed lost. I had a bad headache, and could not get out in the evening, the only service where I can hear. I had eighty

at my Bible-class, but it was all I was equal to for the afternoon. We are very busy, having more people than room. I had forty children under twelve sent in to me one day, and we had to clear a large ward for them ; but they are over-crowded, twenty-two being the licensed number for the room. You can fancy the nests of them, two beds being put together, and two children at the head and two at the foot. The children have only sore eyes, and you may imagine the spirits and noise of a healthy set of forty boys. However, they are very good considering all things, and I have provided slates and books to amuse them. When I appear, there is a general cry of ‘ Please, lady ! ’ They now know they must obey ; as one morning, finding they would not keep quiet till 7 o’clock, I kept back their breakfast till 10 ; but even when only quietly talking, the noise of forty tongues is great.”

A few days later : —

“ I have now sixty children under twelve, so I have turned them into an empty ward. You should hear the singing and rejoicing ; after many days in their beds, such excitement at getting up.”

“ I am almost distracted between sickness and anxiety and drunkenness. I have one head nurse in great danger, and much anxiety about her sister, who is with her, and almost worn out with sorrow and watching. Then these ex-pauper women, whom we are training, were paid their wages on Friday, and the next day five came in

tipsy. It is so disappointing ; some who had done well for six months, and of whom I had hopes. How little I can do ! yet the hewers of wood and drawers of water had an office in the work of the sanctuary, and so, perhaps, may I."

In the midst of all this pressure Christmas came, and Agnes found time and leisure to devise and arrange some little treat for all, nurses and patients. It was one of the characteristics of her work that she never overlooked the individual in the community, but cared for the pleasure of each, as if they stood alone. She had great faith in the softening influence of happiness, and her tender heart went out in active sympathy for those who, immured for life in those hospital wards, had ceased to expect that brightness or gladness could ever come to them. One of her nurses writes of her : "She was so thoughtful of our comfort in every way. If flowers were brought to her, she would be sure to supply us before she thought of herself, fond of flowers as she was. Every Saturday she went round every ward, and took suitable books for the patients to have to read on Sunday. I often think how closely she followed her Saviour in leaving her home, where she might have had so many comforts, and yet she left it to associate with the poorest and lowest of mankind. I feel it was the greatest honor the Lord could have conferred on me, when He led my steps towards her. It was my happy lot to receive from her my first lesson in nursing, at St. Thomas's Hospital, and I

shall never forget her kindness to me then. She seemed to have sympathy for every one, especially for those she knew had just left their homes. When we came to Liverpool, we did not expect to find her as we had found her at St. Thomas's, although we had a very great desire to live with her, feeling sure we should be with a just person and a Christian ; but we soon found we had not half known her before. You know we entered here amid great difficulty, but with her help and love we were able to surmount it all. Before she took us into the wards, she commended us all to God in prayer, and besought his blessing and help in the work. That was the secret of her success in everything. She took all to Jesus, and always exhorted us to do the same. During the first year, when the staff was smaller, she made a practice of visiting our rooms every Saturday and Sunday evening after prayers, for the purpose of speaking to us about Jesus.

“ If she had had occasion to scold us in the week, she was sure to remember it, and would say, ‘ Do not think I don't love you because I scold you ; if I did not love you so much, I should not take that trouble with you.’ She never would allow the smallest fault to go unreprieved. If ever she made a mistake (she would not have been human had she not done so sometimes), she would come and beg our pardon, as if we had been over her, instead of she over us. It has often surprised me, the thought she had for all. There seemed not

one forgotten. If there were several of us sick, she would go into the wards as usual and be busy with her work, but she would not forget to keep running down to see if the invalids were having all they required. Often, if she had nurses on duty she did not think quite up to their work, she would get up and go through the wards several times in the night. She was so anxious always to bear burdens for us. I have often told her that I believed we were a hindrance to her ; for, instead of holding up her hands, we were hanging on her, and bearing her down.

“ She was so fond of bearing our troubles for us, as far as it was possible, that I think she fell under the burden of them. If she had brought us a letter in the morning, and saw us afterwards looking sad, she would take hold of our hand so affectionately, and say, ‘ I hope you have not had bad news, child.’ If she thought one looked ill, she would say, ‘ You are not well,’ or, ‘ You look tired, child.’ If we went to her in trouble, we could not come away from her with the same feeling we went in with ; she would always take the opportunity of pointing us to the Burden-bearer. Often, when I have gone to her with any complaint, or something I have told her I could not do, she would say, ‘ Have you told Jesus so ?’ There lay the secret of all her love and care and thoughtfulness. She never thought she had made a sacrifice in coming here, as she said she had never been so happy in her life. I feel it will be

the greatest honor the Lord can confer on me, if He permits me to finish my course in the work she loved so well. I fear I often err by being impatient to wait the time till I shall see her again."

1866 dawned amid new anxieties, but the trusting heart ever turned to the never-failing source of strength and comfort. A few extracts from her journal will show how she delighted to trace God's loving hand in the little pleasures which now and then came to cheer dark and lonely days. Her delight in flowers was very great, and many times did she learn a lesson from these silent preachers.

She writes to a friend : —

"Your lovely flowers have been telling me all the evening that God is love, and that He loves me. They have been his messenger and yours. They seem almost too pure and lovely for earth, and yet they will fade ; but He is unchangeable. This is such comfort. I could not tell you what ——'s death has been to me, and I scarcely knew how rebellious I was against Him till my flowers told me. They began, 'He careth for you,' and taught me the rest of the verse. I could not have borne even from you the flowers' soothing and sympathy, for I could not tell you all. It seemed to me at times yesterday as if He were blowing upon my work, but now I think it is not mine, but his. If He blow upon my part of it, He will keep his own, and He put me here. The Psalm last night at prayers was indeed for me, — Psalm xxvii. I

have not learned all my flowers' lesson yet ; but when I am busy, I think of them as dear friends waiting in my room to help me."

Again : " I have had some very great trials as well as pleasures lately, but I was trying to balance to-day, and I am sure the latter preponderate. Clouds and sunshine so alternate in my life, that you could scarcely sympathize with one before a change comes. I have now more than a hundred at my Sunday class, and really, if I lift my eyes, their earnest looks and fixed gaze almost overcome me. It is a great responsibility. I was so amused at the old men the other day calling themselves my children. Many of the patients look on me as a kind of house-surgeon. I go to see and direct the dressings with the worst cases, and sometimes do the thing myself to show how. The other day a man asked me to come every day and dress his foot ; it had been ' so much better since I had been at it.' I have a reading for the probationers every week on medical subjects, but it is a great anxiety to me to think how little they know as yet. This morning I have been much with a poor dying thief who is in the agonies of lock-jaw. He seems to try to pray, and to like me to speak to him. I think he would tell me his history if he could ; but speaking is difficult, and the paroxysms come so frequently. We have all great enjoyment in the Thursday evening lectures at Hope Hall. Mr. Lockhart is so earnest and simple. On Good Friday I read aloud in the

evening to the men in one of the wards, and they seemed to enjoy it so much, that I promised them an hour every Friday evening at six. Last Sunday I gave them a lecture on swearing, taking Psalm cxxxix., and dwelling on the verse, 'Thine enemies take thy name in vain.' Upwards of one hundred were present, and most attentive."

Agnes was able to leave Liverpool in May, and join her mother in Dublin. Much as she required rest and change after a year of such continued strain on mind and body, no personal consideration would have induced her to take a holiday, but her mother's health rendered it necessary that she should try German baths in the summer, and the doctors also wished her to winter abroad. They were, therefore, most anxious to see Agnes, and under these circumstances she consented to come. She arrived at midnight on Friday, and returned to Liverpool the Monday week following. Her mother wished that she should have as complete a change as possible, and therefore proposed that Agnes and her sister should spend a few days at Killarney, though it was rather early in the season. They started on the Monday after her arrival, and returned to Dublin on Thursday. The day after they reached Killarney was one of incessant rain, and any excursion was out of the question. In the afternoon, however, they set out on an exploring expedition to the beautiful demesne of Muckross Abbey. Mountains, lake, and sky were alike veiled in heavy mists of rain, and to

her sister the scene was cheerless enough, but Agnes was in raptures ; every graceful tree or picturesque rock she paused to admire, and before one bank of fern and wild flowers she stood long in silent delight ; then turning to her sister, “ O ! what would I give to take that back with me to Liverpool ; what a treasure it would be to have anything so lovely to look at ! ” The next day was bright and clear, and greatly did she enjoy the drive to the head of the lakes, and the return in the boat among the wondrous and varied beauty of that enchanting scenery. Yet the full enjoyment of her visit was somewhat damped by her anxiety as to the spread of cholera in Liverpool ; and though she had daily letters to assure her that there was no cause for uneasiness, she was hourly expecting a possible recall. She looked so bright and well, that her friends felt relieved about her health suffering from her exertions, and her characteristic unselfishness made her at all times conceal from them the frequent headaches and weariness which often made exertion so difficult, and her much-loved work a burden.

The first entry in her journal after her return is as follows :—

“ *May 18th.* — This day last year we began our work. It has been a year of mercies, and its review with the only record I can make, ‘ Hitherto hath the Lord helped,’ leads to the resolve, ‘ I will trust and not be afraid.’ St. Paul’s list of the results of trial has been much on my mind. Pa-

tience is the first link in the chain, and yet I fear it is a lesson still unlearned. How I feel the need of patience! The two following links I seem to know more of—‘Experience’ and ‘Hope.’ How wonderfully I have been helped! God’s watchful care so marking just what I was able to bear, and I seem to have been able to trust Him more, the last few days, and truly I have not been disappointed in my hope. One great comfort I have had in all my trials since coming here has failed me now; it was, like Jonah’s gourd, most refreshing shade in the heat of many a fiery sorrow. My gourd is withered now. I must look more to the Rock. The fig-tree does not blossom, many another resource fails; I must therefore only rejoice in the Lord, and stay on and joy in the God of my salvation.”

“*May 31st.* — God sent me a great pleasure to-day. A little Polish Jew was dying. We could not find his mother when we sent for her, but to-day she came. As I passed through the ward, I stopped as usual at his bed, for he seemed always to look for a word; and then told her she might stay with him all night, as he was so near death. She took my hand and seemed so to crave for sympathy. Not long after, I returned, and found the screen round the bed: he was just gone. She made me go inside with her, and so clung to me, I could not leave her until she went away. Her gratitude was most touching; she kissed my hand and said she would pray for me,

for the Scriptures promised blessing to those who were kind to the Jews."

"*June 2d.* — I must give you some of my brighter scenes. A poor man, who has long been with us, has been in a dying state for days, and often wished me to come and talk to him. He has been long a Christian. When I went to him to-day I thought he was asleep, but he sent for me, if I could spare a moment. He wanted help to keep his eyes fixed on Jesus. As I sat by him, his eyes closed, and he seemed to sleep. I repeated a verse from time to time, and the last stupor came on after he had told me he could indeed trust his Saviour. So, you see all is not work. Is not God loving, to send me to speak of Himself when I was overwhelmed with much serving? It was as if He had taken me those few moments aside to sit at his feet."

"*June 6th.* — Troubles and difficulties and perplexities seem to multiply, but 'My God thinketh upon me.' I try to trust Him with the future, and He gives me work for Him — cups of water to hand to his dying ones, which He will remember long after I and all my shortcomings here are forgotten. There is one poor man who looks for me daily, and folds his hands for prayer when he sees me. He cannot speak, but I take it as a sign that he wants a word about Jesus. Should not such work make all else light? It is such a privilege to be allowed to help on one whom Jesus loves."

"*Fuly 8th.* — Weary — weary. I seem to understand the word now, for I am weary mind and body. I have been trying to use it as a plea, and to accept the invitations to the weary, and have been selecting the passages with the word. Isaiah xxxii. 2, 'As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' Isaiah xl. 28, 'The Lord fainteth not, neither is weary.' Verse 31, 'They that wait on the Lord . . . shall not be weary.' Isaiah l. 4, 'To speak a word in season to him that is weary.' Is this part of my lesson, the part that concerns others? 'For myself, it is to send me to God Himself.' Jeremiah xxxi. 25, 'I have satisfied the weary soul.' The promise and the exhortation, Galatians vi. 7, 'Let us not be weary in well doing, for in *due* season,' in his good time, 'we shall reap, if we faint not.' Judges viii. 4, 'Weary, yet pursuing.' But what helped me most was John iv. 16, 'Jesus being wearied.' Hebrews xii. 3, 'Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds.' 2 Corinthians xi. 27, Paul brings in weariness in his long list. How much trial he had which I have not! and yet to me as to him is the word, 'My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in weakness.' I have that title. What are my trials and weariness to what Christ endured? O! if all this will but make me shelter more in Him who has fullness of sympathy for all! I may come to that source, and draw on it forever."

December 11th, 1866. — I have felt very much to-day a patient's death. He has been a great interest to me lately, though I could not make time to read to him often, and he never was sure of me but on Sunday. It must have been about a year ago that I first noticed him, and I believe God taught me to teach him ; he greatly delighted in my going to read and pray with him. He was suffering from aneurism, and greatly dreaded the death from it, and I, too, feared it for him. Such a timid, fearful disposition as his was. He could not speak aloud, and seldom tried to speak to me ; but as I read and talked to him, I used to see the quiet tears streaming down, and of late his look and pressure of my hand told his loving gratitude. He never would allow me to be sent for, even when he longed for me, but he told the nurse, 'The lady can never know what she has done for me.' On Saturday he said, 'O, nurse, I wish no one but you ever came near me ; no doctor, no one.' 'Not even the lady ?' she asked. 'O, the lady : O yes ! I think I am in heaven when she comes.' Last night I was very weary, and my voice all but gone, but I am so glad I did not yield to the disinclination to go to him. I told him much of the promises of Christ's help and presence, as I knew he so feared death, and even as I spoke, I dreaded the last struggle for the poor, timid one. I gave him the draught I always prepare for him earlier than usual, and when I passed on my night rounds he seemed under its influence. To-day I saw him

when I went up at 6 A. M. I stood beside him, but did not speak, as his breathing was oppressed. On finishing my rounds, as I was ringing for prayers, the nurse ran in, — ‘Taylor is dead.’ I cannot tell you the overwhelming feeling of God’s faithfulness and loving care for his weak ones, letting him go off so quietly.”

The date of the following letter cannot be exactly determined, but the visits of the Kirkdale Training School girls took place, probably, every three months, and for the first year and a half, it was her delight to provide some little feast or amusement for them on these occasions ; it was a great sorrow to her when their quarterly holidays were given up.

“We had all the Kirkdale Training School girls here yesterday, thirty-five girls, who always seem so grateful and well-behaved, and really their greetings when they arrive are quite affectionate. Those who have friends here go to see them in various parts of the building, and those who have not come to our sitting-room and look at pictures, etc. When the tea was laid, I read them a story while the rest were gathering. The table was laid out with flowers, bread and butter, rhubarb tarts, and pots of jam, a large basket of cut currant cake at the top, and several plates of sweet biscuits. After the feast they went to play while we were at tea. The day had been wet and gloomy, but cleared up, and our yard was dry for games, so all went there ; and as it was very mild,

I sent for all the ward children, and we had twenty ranged against the wall, fourteen in blankets; these and some elder boys, and the patients who crowded at the windows, watched the games. They went away at 6.30, each with a nosegay of flowers, which so delighted them."

" 21st. — Few know all we have to contend with here, the sin and wickedness, the evils so hard to check, the struggle to keep any order or rule enforced, the drudgery and the thanklessness. We have here, not only the trials of hospital work, but also of a reformatory, into which men are thrust against their will, and against all the rules of which they kick.

" Sometimes this seems like the land no man careth for, and yet God sends his dew. His love is ever as the sun shining out from behind the darkest cloud."

" *February 4th, 1867.* — In the desperate weather when the people were said to be starving, and we were almost left without bread, while bakers were busy day and night for those outside the walls, I was one day coming in at the gate and admiring the beautiful bread and plentiful supply, when, just because a bit of crust was burned, — I should have liked it to eat, — a woman began railing against the food provided. So is it often with our patients, — there have been some fearful scenes in the oakum sheds lately, rivaling the prison matron's revelations. You remember our visit there, and the woman who accompanied us. On Satur-

day the women in the sheds attacked her, threw her down, tried to run hairpins into her eyes, and, when assistance arrived, were pounding her all over. She had made herself unpopular ; and an active part she had taken in the seizure of a woman who had attacked her fellow-officer the day before, was the cause of this ; and one woman who ventured to say it was a shame, was severely beaten. We are expecting the death of another female officer who was attacked by a girl, thrown down and scratched ; it did not seem serious, but the shock to her system made the wound inflame, erysipelas has ensued, and she is dangerously ill. We need not complain, for we scarcely ever get hard words, much less blows. More and more I come to the belief that these large institutions grouping together such numbers, are the ruin of the inhabitants. One would blush to tell the knowledge and practice of the vilest sins among the children ; girls of seven escaping, to be brought back from the vilest houses. On Wednesday we had a patient brought in who had gone out well a few weeks ago ; he looked more like a wild beast than a man ; he said he had not had his clothes off for three weeks, nor ‘seen his legs,’ deeply ulcered as they are. He had been drinking freely, and was on the verge of *delirium tremens*, of which he died that night. I sometimes wonder if there is a worse place on the earth than Liverpool, and I am sure its workhouse is burdened with a large proportion of its vilest. I can only

compare it to Sodom, and wonder how God stays his hand from smiting. Then, so little effort is made to stem the evil. All lie passive, and seem to say it must be. The attempt at introducing trained workers has certainly not met with any sympathy from clergy or laity. In the nearly ended two years of our work, how few have ever come for the work's sake to wish us God-speed in it! I do not mean to say that I am discouraged. I believe we have had the blessing of the poor; I never regret coming, and I never wish to give it up."

On the 7th March, 1867, the sub-committee of the Workhouse Committee presented a report on the working of the system of trained nurses. This was so favorable to their employment, that the vestry determined to adopt the system as a permanent one, extending it to the whole of the Workhouse Infirmary a year before the period fixed for the trial of the experiment had expired. Mr. Rathbone sent her a copy of the report with the following note : —

"I send you the committee's masterly report; it could not have been better done to do as widespread good as possible. It will strengthen Miss Nightingale's hands and rejoice her heart. The success would have been impossible had it not been for your cheerful firmness and faith. I do most warmly congratulate you on having been so faithful a servant to Him to whom you look in a work so truly his own."

April 7th, she writes :— “ The governor took me to see the female hospital, my new dominion. It was much more extensive than I expected, apparently larger than this ; more surface, because the wards are only at one side of the passages.”

“ *May 23d.* — We have many deaths just now ; on Friday last, one was dying during our meeting for evening prayers ; it seemed so solemn.”

“ *June, 1867.* — Yesterday I had in succession the committee, the matron, the store-keeper, the governor, and clerk of works, and had a busy morning explaining the size I wished the sheets, suggesting improvements in the cut of the shirts, planning closets and rooms, kitchen arrangements, etc., drawing out lists of what I want in furniture, from bed and bedding down to tea-spoons for my new party, and tables, chairs, and forms for the wards.”

To an invalid friend to whom she was very much attached, she writes :—

“ I have several times thought I must try to give you sketches for your tracts. I often think of ‘ She hath done what she could,’ as applying to the power of the least talented to do good. There is a poor deformed cripple, repulsive in appearance, unable to speak plainly, and scarcely able to walk or use his hands, and scarcely able to feed himself. He is in a ward of bed-ridden patients, and has constituted himself their pipe-lighter. I often watch and admire his efforts and patience. He makes an old poker red-hot, and they having

filled their pipes, he goes first to one and puts his poker into the bowl, the man whiffs away, Dick stands patiently watching, by a strong effort holding his shaking hands quiet with the poker, or laying it over his arm ; no calls will move him till the pipe he earnestly watches is quite alight, then he moves on. Dick's pains, and attention, and care to complete one duty at a time, often teach me a useful lesson. I would go from one to another, perhaps satisfied that I had tried to help them.

"I have been waiting for the death of a dear old man to tell you of a very interesting conversation I had with him, but he still lives, and I must tell you a little. Old David has long been a great favorite with us all. He had been a carpenter, and whatever was required in that line he was always glad to do, often when almost unable. He has lately been very ill. One night I repeated to him the hymn, 'Begone, unbelief,' ending 'And then, O how joyful the conqueror's song!'

"Next day he told me that these last words had been on his mind. It almost seemed as if it were his, that 'conqueror's song.'

"He said, Satan had tried to shake his faith and trust. 'But I said, Lord, I am weak, weak, but thou hast said, "Get thee behind me, Satan," and in thy power, in thy power, I say it now. And then I saw Jesus' love to me. What a wonderful thing it is that He so makes known that love! I knew it before, but not as since last

night, and I am only beginning now to know it. That surpassing love, I cannot tell what it is. It is infinite ; and what is infinite but Jesus ? And is it not eternal ? Jesus is a Rock, a fixed Rock : nothing can shake Him, and so his love can never fail. I feel now I have such a firm grasp of that love, I can never again let it go. Only his love made it known to me. His Spirit taught me, not man, for that man could not do. I so thought of your words when I felt Satan go, and that love laying hold of me. O, how joyful the conqueror's song!''

The old man alluded to did not die until July, 1868, five months after she who had cheered his dying pillow had herself joined in the rejoicing strains of the "conqueror's song."

"*December 27th, 1867.* — Now that Christmas is well over you must have a letter. You ought to have had one before, but it was really impossible, for I scarcely know how mind and body stood the strain and anxiety. Greenbank and Ardmore contributed evergreens ; Mr. Rathbone and Emily sent me oranges, apples, and money. So I had kindly help. Of course the smoothness was not unruffled, but I was very glad to have so much. The sick nursery mothers were a great care, but we got them safely through the day by giving them a tree and magic lantern show to themselves. The men and their scourers behaved admirably ; one female patient and some scourers on that side were rather the worse for the liberal

ale allowance, which is a great temptation ; but for 1277 patients, 130 scourers, 60 nurses, and 20 carriers — a total of 1487 — to give no trouble, was a great triumph. I was glad to get all to bed on Christmas night. It was 12 before the nurses finished their games, and my back was breaking. I was very tired yesterday, but as a headache sent me to bed in the afternoon, I had a long rest, and am all right again. Kind Mrs. Cropper sent me such handsome volumes of Trench on the Parables and Miracles, with such a kind letter. The patients were almost as delighted as I was, as most are Irish. Not a bit was broken up, but the branches were planted in pots, each ward claiming a 'tree.' Wreaths were made for my room, and on Sunday they sent me into a day-dream, as I sat and looked at the bits of variegated holly, Chinese barberry, laurel, and laurestinus. The delight of the women with the tree was so great. 'To think I should have lived so many years and not seen the like : I'd have walked five miles to see it.' We carried several helpless ones to see it, and all who were well enough to enjoy it came to look."

Many were the little treats and pleasures of this kind which Agnes from time to time provided for the patients and nurses. Books, flowers, illuminated texts, bright pictures, all these had a humanizing influence, and she considered them essential to the softening and civilizing of the hardened, rugged characters among whom her

work lay. For the nurses, too, she was constantly planning some variety,—a day in the country, a walk to the Botanical Gardens, an excursion to Birkenhead or New Brighton. Thus would she vary the painful routine of their life, and give a fresh turn to their thoughts, which found little pleasant to dwell on within the walls.

But while thus caring for others, she forgot herself; the strength which was above the average, indeed, was yet not superhuman, and the long-continued strain on mind and body told at last. Her journals tell of painful depression; her ever-sensitive conscience, which at all times led to a habit of introspection, resulting in almost morbid self-condemnation, made her judge herself and her work only to see defects. It is evident that nerves, spirit, and strength were all over-taxed. The added care of the Female Hospital, with its unruly inmates, and new revelation of sin and unnatural conduct, was a burden too heavy for one already weighed down with care and overwork; and the beginning of 1868 was one of unusual sickness, the hospitals crowded far beyond their allotted numbers, and fever attacked several in the house. The last letter she ever wrote is as follows:—

“*Saturday, February 1st.* — I fancy it must be a very long time since I wrote, but I really cannot keep count of time, which flies. I have had much and serious illness among my staff; indeed, the weather is so close and unhealthy, it is no

wonder. My work has been tremendous ; we have had constantly upwards of three hundred patients above our proper number ; extra beds on the floor, ten or fourteen in large wards, five to seven in small ; but when about six weeks are past, we may look forward to a diminution. We have had a series of stirring and tragic events lately in our wards. One wretched woman was brought in, who, as soon as her baby was born, cut its throat. As soon as well enough, she goes to her trial. We have had the policeman constantly in the next room. Another poor baby was brought in, found in the streets almost frozen, with a cord round its neck. It was only twelve hours old, but we were able to revive it. It is in a place like this one learns what wickedness there is on earth. I woke this morning feeling as if all night I had been repeating, —

“ ‘ And feel at heart that One above,
In perfect wisdom, perfect love,
‘ Is working for the best.’ ”

And later on came the remembrance of the line, —

“ ‘ That I from self may rest.’ ”

It is what I need to learn : to trust all to Jesus ; leave off from my own doings, and leave all to Him.”

We have spoken of hours of depression, and records of heart-sickening disappointment, and anxious, wearing care ; but no trace of this ever appeared in her face when she went through the

wards, or among the nurses. "Every one tells me I am looking so well and happy," was her constant assurance in her letters home, and all her friends who went to see her remarked on the beaming look in her face. "She is like a sun-beam," was the frequent expression used in speaking of her. But she needed rest, and she was to have it now. We have spoken of the increase of illness, and especially of fever. A young nurse who had been suffering from bronchitis showed symptoms of typhus when too ill to be moved into the Fever Hospital, and Agnes, with her usual thought for others and forgetfulness of herself, gave up her own bedroom to the sufferer, and slept on the floor of her sitting-room. The last letter to her home was written when illness had already so overpowered her as to make her feel it impossible to leave her room, but she gives no hint of pain or fatigue. From the entry in her journal of January 22d, it would seem that she was under the influence of the fatal poison which seems in typhus fever so often to seize upon one after another victim.

Some years before, in writing to one of her aunts, Agnes said : —

"I have just heard of dear Lady Macgregor's sudden death ; it was a joyful summons. I have been thinking much of that poem, 'What is the happiest death to die?' J. says, 'An illness beforehand, not too long, but to allow of speaking dying words, and so being of use.' My reply would

be either illness taken in the performance of duty, or sudden, in the very act of speaking of Jesus to a lost one."

This prayer was indeed granted. We need not look at second causes, or judge as men judge of the reason for this crushing blow. Faith looks higher and sees another side of the picture, — a brighter, truer, more comforting one. The heavenly Father who had watched over his child so lovingly through the thirty-five years of her earthly pilgrimage, who had accepted the early offering of her heart given to Him, before the world with its many alluring pleasures had wooed her affections, who had kept her by his grace ever true to her early faith and love, and led her by such a wondrous path of service and self-devotedness, He had willed that his child should rest from her labors. It was enough ; her place was ready in his presence, and He said to her, " Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

It will, perhaps, be best here to link together the history of her life with the short story of her death-bed, by inserting a letter of recollections from one who was to her friend and sister, during her three years in Liverpool.

Miss Gilpin writes : —

" It was surprising to me to find one filling such a post possessed of such extreme sensibility and deep feeling. I often wished she felt less keenly, but then, as she said, ' if she did not feel pain keenly, she would not feel pleasure,' and there

certainly never was a heart so quickly made to overflow with gratitude to God and to man for small mercies. A note, a flower, a kind word would make her exclaim, 'He careth for me.' She was most considerate for the nurses under her care, and when some were ill with small-pox she visited them daily, as she considered herself proof against infection. Most touching to me is the remembrance of her kind thought for the sick ; all sorts of little cheering attentions and alleviations ; one wondered how she thought of all. I believe no one will ever know what she did for the patients, — making it easy for friends to come from a distance to visit the sick and dying one, and then being near with a comforting word when all was over.

" She would not often allow me to be present at her Bible readings, but I shall never forget one at which I had leave to remain. There must have been nearly a hundred men in the ward ; every eye was fixed upon her, and the attention was profound. Her subject was simple, very well prepared, and spoken without any difficulty or the least hesitation ; just a simple and most forcible, (from its simplicity) setting forth of the Gospel, and then a most earnest prayer that all might be led to accept and embrace it. One felt it was just the teaching required, and again I thanked God for sending her. I now feel her labors were far beyond her strength ; yet when I spoke about it to her, and urged, as I often did, more rest, she

would reply, 'These busy two years have been the happiest of my life ;' adding, 'You must not think because I tell you all my troubles that I am unhappy, for this is not the case ; I am generally very happy, only I like to tell you these things,— I have no one else to speak to, and then you know how to pray for us.' This she very often said, so that in reading her manuscripts I have hoped that the clouds were painted there, but that there *was* sunshine. On Saturdays we almost always read and prayed together, and sometimes on Thursdays too, and these seasons were most precious. In January of this year (1868) some friends met in her rooms for united prayer, and I believe we shall none of us forget the part dearest Agnes took, and the unction and power with which she prayed. It was the last time I ever heard her pray. On Thursday, the 30th January, I noticed that she seemed much depressed ; we had a long talk, and it seemed to me so much of a physical nature that I felt sure she could not be well, and said so. She would not admit that much was the matter. I stayed tea with her, and she rested with me in her room for about an hour. She then went her usual evening rounds, and returned to me, saying she would go to Hope Hall. I tried to persuade her to rest instead, but she said, 'It is the greatest rest and refreshment I have.' I did not oppose it further, and we went. On Tuesday, Feb. 4, I met Dr. Gee, who asked me if I knew that Agnes was ill. Most certainly I did not, and wished to go to

her at once, but he said he had left her 'settled for the night,' and that she had better not be disturbed. After a troubled night, I set off very early to my loved friend, and went into her room (Wednesday, Feb. 5). She looked flushed, but was perfectly herself, greeting me with 'What brings you here so early in the morning?' and added, 'What business has Dr. Gee to make my friends anxious about me?' She was so bright and cheerful, my fears were lessened, and after a little time of prayer together (our last time, Wednesday, Feb. 5), I left her, as she wished to be 'quite still.' The next day (Thursday, Feb. 6), the disease was declared to be typhus, but the doctor gave us good hope that she would get through nicely, and gave directions that she was not to be spoken to or roused to speak about anything. I was with her most of that day, and arranged about her being nursed as she wished to be, and did many things for her to keep her dear mind easy, for just at that time she was full of thought and care about little matters, and she would then send for me and confide to me her wishes (which chiefly referred to her work). In the evening we had the sitting-room nicely prepared, and she was removed into it on Friday morning (Feb. 7). You know the room. Her bed was placed between the windows, which were slightly darkened, and then by means of the window opposite the door, and the fire, we were able to preserve the most perfect ventilation. The

doctor who was called in said, 'We could not have a more perfect sick-room.' The darling was greatly pleased with her change, and looked up to me with a sweet smile, saying, 'I am so comfortable!'

"We went on very hopefully for a week, the darling sleeping most of her time, and when not asleep, not seeming inclined to speak. She asked sometimes, 'Is Miss Gilpin here?' and said, 'She should not come every day; it is too great an exertion.' Once or twice she sent for me to write a note on business for her, but very soon there was no connected thought. She would talk unconsciously about her wards, her nurses, and her work; and when the alarming symptoms came on, she fancied herself a third party, and suggested alleviations for the difficult breathing. On the Friday week (Feb. 14) after she was taken ill, she was thought in danger, and another medical man was sent for. On Saturday (Feb. 15) we had a little more hope. Sunday (Feb. 16) was a terribly anxious day. I met the nurses for prayer, and a most solemn time we had. There was much prayer for her both in the workhouse and out of it, and I could not believe she was to die. When the doctors said, 'It will be a miracle if she lives — the power of man cannot save her,' I replied, 'A miracle will be wrought, then,' so fully did I think she must live. But God saw otherwise, — the work was more fully done than I had thought, and the 'well done' about to be said to one who

had indeed toiled all the morning, and rested at noon. All hope was given up on Tuesday night (Feb. 18): the pulse at 150 — no power to subdue it. And so, 'the silver cord was loosed, the golden bowl was broken,' and the purified spirit of this self-sacrificing, earnest worker returned to God, to find to her surprise and joy and gratitude the battle fought, the victory won, and the rest attained (February 19, 1868, 2 A. M.)."

"It is impossible to describe the grief I witnessed at the hospital, the following morning. The dear remains looked very lovely, and the room was full of nurses and probationers, who had come in to look at the loved form once more. All was quiet, solemn grief, — I had rather dreaded the removal of the coffin, fearing some want of solemnity, but I need not have feared. It was removed the following Friday. I got to the workhouse as early as I could. Mr. Rathbone had sent some men for the necessary work, and all was done so quietly that your dear aunts and I, who were in the little room close to hers, could not hear a word. A beautiful oak coffin, with a great deal of silver about it, and a lovely cross of white camellias fastened on the top. I asked leave for a short time of prayer when all was ready. All the nurses came in, and in that dear room, surrounded by her furniture, pictures, etc., where she and I had so often knelt together, we bowed down before the pitiful Father, who had recalled our dear one, and who had caused us to mourn.

Your dear aunts prayed, and I prayed, and indeed all hearts, I do believe, joined in prayer ; it was a time never to be forgotten. The coffin was carried out into the hall, and we all stood round while it was placed in the case in which it was to cross the Channel. All was very still, even grief was hushed, and though there were many tears, there was no sound. I looked up just as the arrangements were complete, and to my great surprise, but great interest, I saw landing and stairs lined with people. The poor patients had come out of the different wards, and were looking down on the coffin which held the remains of one who had lived and moved among them as an angel of mercy, comforting body and mind. They felt, and we felt, that they had indeed lost a kind and generous friend, who sacrificed her life to her zeal in the cause of God. The workhouse road was also lined with people, but all silent, though many were in tears. It was so solemn, I ceased to regret that the precious remains had been removed. It was better to lay her in her father's grave ; and if her purified and happy spirit had been looking down, it feels to me as if she would quite approve. The hearse and coaches disappeared, and all was gone of our darling, and we returned to her desolate rooms to weep and pray."

Close to where the waters of Lough Swilly ripple to the foot of the Ennishowen hills, the little churchyard of Fahan lies in one of the many lovely spots that gem the shore of the lake of

shadows. The Gollan rises with its rounded, cairn-crowned summit close beside it, — the woods of Glengollan and the Rectory grounds surround it on two sides, and below, the high-road passes, separating it from the sunny meadows of the old, much-loved home of Fahan House. Eighteen years before, the father to whom Agnes had been so fondly attached was laid in that churchyard, and his grave was reopened for her on the 25th February, 1868.

Immediately behind the grave rises the east window of the old church, now a most picturesque ruin, veiled with glossy ivy. A few old trees partially conceal it from the road, and cast their long shadows over lowly graves around — the graves of the poor — many of whom she had comforted in sorrow, assisted in poverty, visited in sickness, and encouraged in the hour of death. It seems indeed the fit resting-place for her. The mourning in the parish when the news of her death came was great indeed, and few were missing from the crowd, who met the funeral procession as it came from Derry. The schoolmistress, who was most sincerely attached to her, wrote the following graphic description of the scene.

“ We have just returned from the last home and resting-place of our precious, loving, and much-loved friend. It will in a measure gratify you to know that all the people of Fahan, far and near, came out to show and give our last tribute of gratitude to our dear, dear Miss Jónes. All the

young and old men went to meet her ; the women gathered in the graveyard near her grave ; first the children, then all the young girls of her class, next middle-aged and old women, your dear friend Mrs. C. at a short distance, leaning on her husband's arm. When the solemn toll of the bell struck the ear, it was fearful ; it caused one bitter sob through all present. The hearse came forward to the gate with its heavy plumes ; all was solemn stillness ; then came the coffin with our dear one, carried on the shoulders of the young men of your evening class ; there was one suppressed murmur, 'O, dear.' Then followed a number of clergymen — then her uncles and cousins, etc. — then the people. Mr. King read the service ; a beautiful wreath of snowdrops and white primroses twined with ivy and yew from your own old garden was put into the grave on the coffin, with a lovely bunch of violets ; then the little children scattered in snowdrops, monthly roses, and spring flowers, — no stranger was allowed to do anything ; the young men of the place put in the clay, and gently covered all up. The sorrow and mourning and bitter lamentation are great, but softened by the intense gratification that she is laid here."

The people of Fahan, revering her memory, and wishing to perpetuate it by some enduring monument, subscribed for this purpose, and the result is that a very handsome monument was erected in Fahan Church in October, 1869. It consists of a tablet of pure Carrara marble, supported

by brackets, and capped by a moulded cornice, which bears the following inscription : " The Master is come, and calleth for thee. — John vi. 28. Erected by the Minister and people of Fahan and their Bishop, in memory of Agnes Elizabeth Jones, formerly of this Parish ; Born 10th November, 1832 ; cut off by fever, 19th February, 1868." The Scriptural quotation is in gilt letters, the rest of the inscription being in black. Over this, in bold relief, leaning on a broken column, is a female figure representing Grief. The background is of black marble, which, from the contrast, gives a fine effect to the pure white statuary marble. The design and execution of the monument were intrusted to Mr. Robert Kell, sculptor, of Londonderry. Underneath the inscription already quoted are the following beautiful lines, the composition, we understand, of the Lord Bishop of Derry :—

" Alone with Christ in this sequestered place,
Thy sweet soul learned its quietude of grace ;
On sufferers waiting in this vale of ours,
Thy gifted touch was trained to finer powers.
Therefore, when Death, O Agnes ! came to thee —
Not in the cool breath of our silver sea,
But in the city hospital's hot ward,
A gentle worker for the gentle Lord —
Proudly, as men heroic ashes claim,
We ask'd to have thy fever-stricken frame,
And lay it in our grass, beside our foam,
Till Christ the Healer call his healers home."

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